
education review

A Creative Future



volume 15 • number 2
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Preface

This edition of *Education Review* reaffirms the importance of creativity in our schools. Teachers have long feared that the rigidity of the National Curriculum, distorted by end of key stage testing, has diminishing creative opportunities for pupils and teachers. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to explore their own creativity and self-development through music, drama and the arts, and through physical activities. This is a particular loss for pupils whose circumstances prevent them from having access to these opportunities at home. Equally, teachers are constrained by the pressures of time and workload, school performance tables and OFSTED inspections from using their own creativity in their teaching and within their classrooms. Articles by Maurice Galton, Rachel Jupp, Marilyn Osborn and Elizabeth McNess, John Chowcat and Joan Freeman confirm teachers' views on the narrowing of the curriculum and explore the range of the abilities, skills and qualities which are needed by young people in their working and personal lives.

If inspiration were needed on the importance of curriculum enrichment, the articles by Elisabeth Bartlett, Nick Jones, Jane Holden, Paul Cleghorn, Richard Fawcett, John Shiels, Peter Patilla and Sue Mappin demonstrate what can be done to stimulate and challenge pupils through the creative arts and physical activities. They write from within schools and from complementary organisations working closely with schools.

The article by Baroness Blackstone outlines the Government's proposals building on the report of the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education, chaired by Professor Ken Robinson. Victoria Todd of the National Campaign for the Arts, however, describes the initial struggle to get the Government to act on this widely praised report. The National Union of Teachers has a proud record of sponsoring the arts, including Music for Youth and the annual Schools Proms. For this reason, the NUT is organising a joint conference in July 2002 aimed at promoting creativity in education with the National Campaign for the Arts. This edition of *Education Review* makes an important contribution to that campaign.



Doug McAvoy
General Secretary, National Union of Teachers

A creative and cultural education for the 21st century

– the need to develop creative and cultural education in order to meet the economic, technological and social challenges of the 21st Century.

Tessa Blackstone

Baroness Blackstone is Minister of State for the Arts at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Abstract: *This article looks at what progress the Government has made in taking forward the proposals made by the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education. It identifies a range of projects and initiatives, in which the Department for Education and Skills is included, aimed to enhance children's experience of the creative arts and the opportunities that exist through galleries, museums and libraries to widen horizons. The Government is aware of the importance of creativity to the cultural well-being of society.*

OUR Green Paper, *Culture and Creativity: The Next Ten Years*,¹ set out this Government's strong belief in the importance of fostering creative and cultural education from an early age. Encouraging creative thought and action in children is essential if our adults of the future are to meet the many challenges of the new century.

The Challenges

Modern society is constantly changing and evolving. Technological advancement and economic development, changes in working patterns and the nature of work and shifts in the structure and values of society all play their

part in the formation of the world in which our children will in time emerge to choose their careers and compete in the job market. We want them to be well-prepared and equipped with the knowledge and confidence to meet these challenges head on. Education is the key to nurturing the creativity that will help them to do this.

For many people, the “job for life” is a thing of the past, so there is a need for people to develop their ability to think creatively in order to find out what is right for them and explore their potential – to make the most of what is on offer. It is significant that employers will now often look for skills such as the ability to communicate well, adapt to change and think creatively when considering the right candidate for the job. The encouragement of creative and original thought can and should form an integral part of every child’s education. It is equally important that children have the opportunity to make use of ICT developments and other technological aids that can add an exciting dimension to traditional learning methods.

The National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education’s (NACCCE)² report was published back in May 2000 and was widely welcomed by the education sector. Its suggestions for tackling inadequate creative and cultural provision in our education system also influenced Government thinking. My department, along with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), has made progress in taking forward many of the report’s recommendations, some examples of which I would like to outline here.

Creative partnerships

Creative Partnerships is set to be one of the most significant culture and education programmes in a generation. Starting in April 2002, it is designed to create new and sustainable ways of including young people at school in the cultural life of their communities, nurturing their innate creativity and supporting teachers, artists, cultural and creative organisations and individuals to work with them. This is a pioneering £40 million, two-year pilot that we hope to extend and develop beyond 2004.

Creative Partnerships is about sharing the benefits of the best projects with schools that would not otherwise have had the opportunity. The pilots will target 16 of the most deprived areas in the country. Each programme will have a director, who will be responsible for brokering the link between the schools and artists. Crucially, Creative Partnerships will encourage young people in the arts and creativity in its broadest sense. We want schools to be able to work with architects, web and fashion designers, filmmakers and DJs, as well as musicians, actors and visual artists. Each school selected to participate will receive a budget in order to deliver programmes in school over two years.

Creative Partnerships is about building relationships over the long term and providing schools with the resources to deliver. Resources will provide training for teachers, cover for lessons and funds for the school to get professional support for projects.

Artsmark

2001 saw the first round of the Arts Council of England's Artsmark awards, a national award for schools in England. It is a symbol of recognition for schools making a strong commitment to the full range of the arts: art and design, music, dance and drama. Artsmark recognises and promotes good practice in arts education provision, extends arts education opportunities for young people in schools, and encourages effective partnerships between schools, arts practitioners and arts organisations.

Music-making

Music-making should be for everyone. The Government has made a new commitment to providing opportunities for every primary school child to learn to play a musical instrument, as stated in last year's election manifesto and in the recent DfES White Paper, *Schools Achieving Success*.³ The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is working closely with DfES, and with

We want schools to be able to work with architects, web and fashion designers, filmmakers and DJs, as well as musicians, actors and visual artists.

a wide range of external partners, to develop a strategy for delivering these opportunities to each child, regardless of background.

In July 2001, I announced a further Arts Council Lottery grant of £30 million for the National Foundation for Youth Music (Youth Music) to continue its work through to 2005. Youth Music was set up by DCMS in 1999 to promote and develop music-making opportunities for young people, up to and including 18 years old. Youth Music's funds support a broad range of musical styles and cultural traditions, reaching children and young people who often have the least access to music-making opportunities.

My department also continues to work closely with the DfES on its Music Standards Fund (MSF), which is providing £270 million over a period of five years for the protection and expansion of LEA music services. All 150 LEAs are now receiving funds from the MSF for instrumental tuition and for a range of other music services such as festivals, visiting artists and the provision of instruments.

New Technology – Culture Online

Digital technologies have the potential to increase the benefits provided by arts and culture, by enabling the development of new forms of engagement, new forms of access, and increased levels of educational achievement.

In 2001, we set out our proposals for Culture Online, a new service that would offer children and adults tailored access to the nation's arts and cultural resources, through the internet and using other digital channels, such as digital television. It would enable many more people to engage in cultural activities and open new opportunities for participation, learning and enhancing skills.

Our primary aim for Culture Online is to enrich and enhance the curriculum with materials that could be used by teachers and children in the classroom and at home, but that would also be relevant, perhaps in re-packaged form, to adult learners. It would be delivered and run in partnership with cultural and educational organisations, broadcasters and publishers, creating a network of resources and forging links between organisations to pool content, ideas and expertise.

Creative industries

The creative industries are important to the UK economy and for the jobs of the future. They generate over £112 billion a year in revenue for our national economy, of which £10 billion is generated from exports. They employ 1.3 million people and a recent survey suggested that just under 90,000 full time equivalent jobs will be created in this sector between 2000 and 2005. A majority of these will be skilled jobs – widening our skills base and equipping us as a nation to take the lead in the development and use of new technologies. But if the creative industries are to take full advantage of the opportunities opening up, it is essential that they have access to the right people with the right skills in the right numbers.

That is why DCMS and Universities UK have established a Creative Industries/Higher Education Forum. The forum brings together members of Government and leading players from the creative industries and educational establishments to consider strategic policies relating to education and research in the UK creative industries. It will work with employers and universities to ensure that students have the knowledge and skills necessary to progress quickly from university to employment.

BBC education

The BBC runs many excellent television and radio education programming initiatives, ranging from the “Learning Zone” on BBC2, to the two new children's digital channels, one for under-sixes and another for six to 13- year olds, containing an interactive capacity so that children can take part in online clubs and communities. The “BBC Learning” website is also a valuable and

entertaining learning resource, catering to the needs of both children and adult learners. The BBC is currently developing proposals for a digital curriculum, with plans to supply digital content across core subjects and key stages using interactive digital technology and multi-media content.

NESTA

NESTA, the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, is a sponsored body of the DCMS, and was established by an Act of Parliament in 1998, with £200 million from the National Lottery. Its aim is to support and promote talent, innovation and creativity in science, technology and the arts. NESTA funds education initiatives which release creative energy and entrepreneurial flair, using approaches to teaching and learning which are fresh and innovative. Examples of such projects include “Hi8us” in Birmingham, a group developing an interactive web-based drama, or e-drama. This new medium is targeted at disaffected teenagers in youth organisations and young people in schools in the Telford area. NESTA also supports more traditional schemes such as “Drawing Power”, a UK-wide campaign to support the creative power of drawing in all walks of life and for all ages.

Museum and gallery education

Museums and galleries can also make a contribution to the social and cultural identity of our nation and to education. They can make learning interesting and stimulating.

A £500,000 DCMS/Resource Museums Education Challenge Fund was launched by the Museums and Galleries Commission in 1999. The fund, channelled through the Area Museums Councils, has contributed to the funding of 400 collaborative projects between schools and museums all over England. The DfES £3.2m Museums and Galleries Education Programme, supported by the Campaign for Learning in Museums and Galleries, has also funded 63 projects over the past three years: projects like the “*Does Art make a Difference?*” programme, run by Dulwich Picture Gallery, which involved young people with special needs from local schools. DfES announced a further £1million for a second phase of the programme in November 2001. [Note: see article from the project co-ordinator of the Dulwich Picture Gallery in this edition.]

One of the key findings in evaluating such projects is the impact which access to these art collections and handling them in the classroom, can make in bringing history to life and encouraging learning in other subject areas, as well as helping children to build confidence and develop skills. Using museum objects seems, from the evidence we have, to switch children on to learning, especially for those who find traditional learning methods in the classroom difficult. The use of handling collections in schools is something I very much want to encourage.

Working with libraries

The Government's commitment to improving education recognises that access to the best of children's literature through libraries is essential for children of all ages. The world of children's literature is a valuable resource for improving literacy and vocabulary, while at the same time opening up new worlds that can provide an escape from the realities of every-day life for children today or help to provide explanations for what is happening in their own lives.

School libraries are of course a key resource for pupils. They support the National Curriculum by providing extra books and ICT equipment, and enable pupils to develop research and information retrieval skills which will equip them for lifelong learning and employment. The DfES is looking at ways of supporting the development of school libraries. The Government welcomes the moves public libraries are making to support pupils by opening homework clubs, and encourages local authorities to ensure that they are planned with schools and are adequately staffed and resourced.

Through the DCMS/Wolfson Public Libraries Challenge Fund, a partnership between DCMS and the Wolfson Foundation, DCMS is funding "Their Reading Futures", a project specifically targeted at training children's librarians. The project is run by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in collaboration with Launchpad, the umbrella body which promotes libraries for children.

My department also funds a number of projects which aim to promote literature to children with learning difficulties, children in care and other socially excluded young people. Examples of the kind of "Reader Development" projects funded recently by the DCMS/Wolfson Fund, that contribute to literacy and the National Curriculum, include Lancashire County Council's scheme, which arranges reader development activities aimed at children, young people and their families who have learning difficulties. These activities will be supported by the development of 15 multi-media collections and a specially designed website to provide resources and support to those wanting to develop their basic learning skills. The project will not only help the individual's learning capabilities but will help them grow in confidence and fulfil their potential. In addition it will provide much needed support for parents, carers and teachers.

Learning about our historic environment ...

The historic environment, too, can contribute to many aspects of the Government's agenda, and I am keen to see that the full potential of the historic environment as a learning resource is realised (whether at school, in further and higher education or in later life), both as a learning experience in its own right and as a tool for other disciplines. *The Historic Environment: A Force for Our Future*,⁴ includes a proposal to consider promoting free access for

children to historic properties and also a proposal that English Heritage should increase its activities in developing the place of education within the historic environment sector.

English Heritage already provides free school visits to its properties for around 500,000 school children and their teachers each year. These allow children to learn about significant features of this country's historic environment and enable teachers to use this immense resource to support the school curriculum.

Other organisations play their part too. The National Trust works closely with schools and welcomes over 600,000 children to its properties each year. Valuable educational schemes are also operated by the Royal Parks Agency, Historic Royal Palaces and the Historic Houses Association.

... And our built environment

Encouraging children to learn about their local built environment helps them to develop a sense of community and of belonging. The Hackney Building Exploratory is a great example of this. Working with modest means from a converted Victorian school building in Hackney, North London, the Exploratory has established a remarkable reputation for its work with schools and local community groups.

Using displays and interactive exhibits, it delves into a wide range of mainstream subjects ranging from science, maths and history to sociology and demography, using the physical and built environment of the borough (past, present and future) as the vehicle. The Exploratory is continually proving its worth in helping children and local people to develop an understanding of the community of which they are a part, thereby empowering them to participate in decisions affecting their own environment.

Next steps – the future of creative and cultural education

At the request of ministers, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is taking forward an arts project to explore ways in which the contribution of the arts to pupils' education can be maximised. Work so far has included developing an agreed set of aims, objectives and outcomes for arts education and means of collecting evidence of these outcomes. A similar project has been initiated to promote pupils' creativity across a wide range of subjects, and the QCA has been developing a framework for use by schools. DCMS is working with DfES and the QCA on both these projects and the work will culminate in a report to the DCMS and DfES Secretaries of State in 2003.

The many education initiatives I have outlined, and countless others up and down the country which I have not had space to mention in this article, are all doing their utmost to help young people to succeed and make the most of their creative capabilities. Certainly, the future holds its challenges, but it

also holds exciting opportunities for those who want to grab them with both hands. The will is there. Through advance in developing the creative and cultural education of our nation, we are moving in the right direction to harness it. ■

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Fighting for creativity

Victoria Todd

Victoria Todd is director of the National Campaign for the Arts. Formerly director of the Council for Dance Education and Training, she lobbied successfully for young people's equality of access to vocational dance training and established a reputation as an effective arts advocate, a role that she has pursued in her current post. She was recently made an Honorary Fellow of the Laban Centre, London.

Abstract: *The National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education has produced clear evidence of the importance of creativity across all aspects of school education. The Committee's proposals include the removal of the distinctions between core and foundation subjects and a review of the structure and balance of the National Curriculum. This article details the National Campaign for the Arts' efforts to ensure that the Committee's recommendations were pursued and that schools were made aware of them.*

THE National Campaign for the Arts (NCA) initially started a campaign to highlight the importance of creativity in education as a result of a meeting with Professor Ken Robinson, former chairman of the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE). Ken was enthusiastic and excited about the extensive work that the Committee had done to create a report which gave clear and concrete evidence of the importance of creativity across all aspects of school and adult education.

Commissioned by the Secretaries of State for Education and for Culture, it showed the Government's commitment to exploring and valuing creative and cultural activity in an education context. The recommendations within the report were wide ranging, proposing action not only to Government departments and agencies, but to individual schools, teachers and arts organisations across the country. Enthused by Ken's passion and commitment for the changes to education that the report might initiate, the NCA waited with eager anticipation for the launch of the report.

We first sensed that there was a problem when there was no fanfare and roll of drums for a report which had taken an eminent group of people almost two years to research and compile. An unassuming press release about the publication of the report appeared late one Friday afternoon, signalling to us that there were not going to be any grand announcements or proposals emanating from the two departments that had commissioned the report. We

immediately became apprehensive that the important messages within the report were going to be lost and the opportunities presented by the recommendations allowed to slip away.

It was true that a number of the recommendations of *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*¹ were challenging – removal of the distinction between core and foundation subjects and a review of the structure and balance of the National Curriculum in order to achieve greater parity between subjects; increased freedom for schools to devise patterns of curriculum provision; a commitment from OFSTED to inspect all areas of the curriculum, including the arts and humanities; dedicated funds for all schools to provide creative and cultural programmes and activities and the promotion of creative and cultural education across all subjects in the curriculum for teachers in training. However, the report supported its recommendations with clear examples from across the teaching, business, science, technology and arts communities of the importance of fostering a better appreciation and understanding of the value of creative and cultural education.

The report pointed out that without the development of creative thinking and learning skills, young people would be less able to respond flexibly to the unpredictable challenges of the 21st century. With quickly shifting social, cultural, technological and economic patterns and the subsequent demands on personal, emotional, academic and spiritual resources, education needed to adapt and prepare young people for the challenges of the technology age, rather than preparing them to work in an industrial era which was drawing to a close.

Arts and the curriculum

At the time of the report's publication, the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA) was close to completing a review of the National Curriculum. This presented an important opportunity to instigate real change into the system and, at the very least, restore the place of the arts in the curriculum. The NCA immediately advised its nationwide membership of the report's existence and supportive content and launched a letter writing campaign aimed at reinstating the arts on the school timetable.

As a result of the campaign, not only were the arts reinstated, but the QCA was commissioned by the Secretary of State to "look again" at the place of the arts and creativity in the curriculum. As a result, the QCA embarked on two separate three-year enquiries into the place of the arts and creativity across the curriculum.

But the NCA was determined to ensure that the other recommendations of the report should be pursued too. With help from Professor Robinson, we formed an advisory group made up of representatives from subject associations from across the curriculum. All subject groups had welcomed the

report and the emphasis it placed on ensuring that creative teaching and learning was as much a part of the maths, science and technology curricula as the arts and humanities. They recognised that by providing teachers with the

...not only were the arts reinstated, but the QCA was commissioned by the Secretary of State to “look again” at the place of the arts and creativity in the curriculum

opportunity to explore their own creative thinking and teaching styles and making connections across subject boundaries, teachers themselves could become more energised and enthused by teaching.

Making the report available

The advisory group also recognised immediately that the greatest obstacle to promoting the recommendations and issues raised in the report was the lack of availability of the original publication. The DfES had made the report available on its website, but sophisticated technology was required to download a copy. Few printed copies had been issued and the waiting list to receive them ran into months.

The NCA decided that a user-friendly summary of the report needed to be produced, and with assistance from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the Gulbenkian Foundation, Regional Arts Boards and the Performers' Alliance, 100,000 copies of a 12-page summary were produced and circulated to teachers and schools across the country. At the same time the NCA entered into closer dialogue with the DfES and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The NCA presented two key messages:

- the development of creative thinking, teaching and learning strategies were necessary for all subjects across the curriculum to become accessible and interesting;
- the arts were an essential part of a balanced curriculum and an excellent means of promoting creative thinking and learning in a safe and structured environment.

Following the publication of the summary, the NCA became deluged with requests for advice and further information from a broad range of interest groups around the country. Teachers, parents, governors, local authorities, special advisers, community groups, artists and arts organisations all wanted to know what part they could play in the delivery of a more creative and culturally aware education system.

Many teachers confirmed that they felt constrained by assessment regimes and were deluged by new Government initiatives. However, they welcomed the promotion of creative teaching and learning as they saw it as an opportunity to re-engage with the aspects of teaching that had attracted them to the profession in the first place.

The NCA was sent examples of innovative and creative projects occurring in schools across the country. Some focused on establishing closer relationships with the arts in order to enhance existing arts programmes or to use the arts to carry messages about other subjects in the curriculum that were more accessible to children with diverse learning styles. Others concentrated attention on how to enhance teachers' abilities to deliver any subject in creative and stimulating ways through a programme of continuing professional development. Many were inspired by arts practitioners who recognised the potential of their particular specialism to act as a means of delivering messages while also developing new skills.

Local authorities and Regional Arts Boards initiated conferences to explore how creative and cultural opportunities could be developed on a regional basis. Government departments and agencies, seeing the tide of support for the report's recommendations, began to consider how aspects of the recommendations could be developed further.

Creative Partnerships

To date the greatest single project resulting from *All Our Futures* must be the development of the Creative Partnerships pilot programme. This was conceived by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and is being instigated by the Arts Council of England under the able leadership of Peter Jenkinson. The project is an exciting £40 million initiative that will develop long-term partnerships between schools, cultural and creative organisations and artists. It will give thousands of children the opportunity for unprecedented access to the wealth of cultural experience available across the country and is designed to enrich learning across the whole curriculum.

Initially focused in 16 of the most deprived areas of the country it will offer a range of enhanced and sustained opportunities for children and will provide teachers and artists with training to enable them to use the arts in educational contexts to maximum effect. Research programmes will also be developed in each of the 16 pilot areas to provide objective evidence on the effects of enhanced arts provision within the context of school.

In its submission to the DCMS on future funding priorities emerging from the Spending Review, the NCA has lobbied for a nationwide roll-out of Creative Partnerships so that all children in the country will have the opportunity to sample high quality arts experience as part of their daily education.

The NCA supports the high priority being given to research within the pilot programme, as we are aware of the need to provide objective evidence of the value of the arts and creative practices in relation to the enhancement of the educational experience. We believe without doubt that evidence is there. With the increased awareness of the importance of different forms of intelligence expounded by Howard Gardner² and the need to deliver education through a range of different learning styles, we believe that the value of the arts in delivering a rich, diverse and accessible curriculum will soon be recognised.

All our futures – the future

The NCA owes a big debt of thanks to Professor Robinson and the members of the NACCCE group. Without their consistent support and encouragement to NCA members it would have been possible for the report to slip away into obscurity. We are also grateful to the National Union of Teachers (NUT) for supporting a joint NUT/NCA conference on Creativity in Education, which will be taking place in July 2002.

The NCA will continue to advocate the realisation of other recommendations set out in the *All Our Futures* Report. We are particularly concerned that teachers in initial teacher training should gain an understanding and appreciation of the importance of fostering creative teaching and learning styles. We also want to ensure that the stress on assessment is not permitted to mitigate against the delivery of creativity across all subjects in the curriculum simply because the effects of creativity are, in most cases, best assessed through formative rather than summative assessment. We hope that the research findings and evaluation resulting from the Creative Partnerships scheme will show conclusively what an important role the arts have to play in promoting high standards across all areas of education. ■

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A National Curriculum balance sheet

Abstract: *The National Curriculum was meant to raise educational standards by setting standards of knowledge for all schools to work towards and by providing clear learning objectives for teachers and pupils. This article looks at the effects of introducing the National Curriculum in schools and uses classroom evidence to suggest that rather than raising standards it has led to a steady decline in progress and an impoverished curriculum.*

The National Curriculum: a retrospective view

At the January 1987 North of England Education Conference, the then Secretary of State, Kenneth Baker, set out the purposes of what he later came to refer to as “My National Curriculum”. First, it was to set standards of knowledge that would provide incentives for all schools to catch up with the best and hence raise the overall standards. Second, by providing clear objectives it would enable teachers to plan work more carefully. Third, it would provide parents with clear and accurate information about what their child did at school. Fourth, it would avoid the kinds of repetition that often happen when children move from primary to secondary school. Fifth, it should encourage teachers to concentrate on their task of helping each child to fulfil his or her potential to their maximum ability.¹

In this article I want to explore how far, some 12 years further on, Kenneth Baker’s aspirations have been realised, using the evidence collected from my own research during the period 1975 to the present. These mainly classroom studies, at least, offer an interesting perspective on this “little experiment”.

The National Curriculum: a researcher’s perspective

I wish, therefore, to look at the National Curriculum from the point of view of a researcher who has spent much of his time in schools during the past two

Maurice Galton

Maurice Galton is Professor of Education at the University of Cambridge.

decades. This included the period spanning the introduction of the National Curriculum and the initial attempts to implement it in schools. Throughout much of this period my research consisted of carrying out observations in a variety of classrooms. From this particular research perspective, therefore, the relative success or failure of the National Curriculum centres on certain key questions:

1. How has the curriculum influenced teaching and pupil learning?
2. What has happened to standards?
3. What has happened to teacher morale and the impact on professionalism?
4. How far has the curriculum remained broad and balanced and promoted continuity across the different phases of education?

Teaching and learning

The ORACLE (Observational Research and Classroom Learning Evaluation) took place at the University of Leicester from 1970-80. The project looked at primary school children's behaviour and progress, including transition from primary to secondary, when working with different teachers and teaching methods. The research evidence, as well as that obtained during the study of the introduction of the National Curriculum in small schools, both support

Despite the pressures on teachers to “change the way they teach” the patterns of classroom discourse appear to have remained remarkably stable

the view that the National Curriculum has not improved the quality of teaching and learning in primary school. As a result of the campaign in the media and by the former Chief Inspector, Chris Woodhead, there has, of course, been a sizeable increase in whole class teaching over the decade. But despite the emphasis placed on increasing teacher-pupil interactions through questioning, this shift in pedagogy has not materialised. ORACLE evidence² is quite clear on this point. Interaction has increased considerably and therefore teacher questioning has also increased. But the ratio of teachers telling pupils rather than asking them, is almost exactly the same as it was 20 years ago when the first ORACLE study was done.³

Perhaps the most striking feature of the data concerned the pattern of discourse. Many studies have shown the importance of questioning, particularly open-ended questions designed to improve pupils' capacity to “think for themselves”. In the 1970s ORACLE study the proportion of questions, as a percentage of all teacher utterances, was 12 per cent. By the

late 1990s in the ORACLE replication the figure had increased to 16.2 per cent. But the corresponding figures for teacher statements (of facts, ideas, directions and routine instructions) had shifted from 44.7 to 59.2 per cent. If therefore we compare the ratio of statements to questions across the two decades the figures are 3.72 and 3.65 respectively. Thus the relative amounts of *talking at*, as against *talking with* pupils, have remained almost unchanged during the 20 years. Furthermore the evidence from the initial evaluations of the Literacy Hour suggests similar patterns.⁴ Comparing the two ORACLE studies there were 3.6 times more closed than open questions asked in 1976. In 1996 the figure was 3.5. Hardman *et al*'s corresponding figures are 3.1. Thus despite the pressures on teachers to “change the way they teach” the patterns of classroom discourse appear to have remained remarkably stable. The National Curriculum has resulted in a shift in classroom organisation towards more whole class interaction, but teachers appear to have bolted existing forms of practice onto these new externally imposed requirements.

The National Curriculum and standards

The debate about national standards is confounded by the lack of any systematic effective monitoring during the lifetime of the National Curriculum. Davies and Brember⁵ have monitored performance in English over eight years with evidence of a decline in standards, particularly among low achievers. In the ORACLE replication² average scores in all three areas (mathematics, language usage and reading) fell significantly in comparison to the results two decades previously.

We examined this data to see if we could explain this apparent decline in standards of attainment. First we looked at the views advanced by critics that it was down to poor teaching. However, all the factors said, in their view, to characterise effective classroom practice, such as greater amounts of whole class *direct teaching*, higher levels of pupil *engagement with task* etc. (see Woodhead),⁶ had increased since the 1970s. We then examined the possibility that the trend that has seen a rise in girls' achievement compared to boys', might be the explanation because the 1976 and 1996 samples contained different gender balances. However, when we created sub-samples with equal numbers of boys and girls from the high, low and medium ability bands, the differences remained.

There was one other piece of evidence that we could use. The figures obtained in the 1985 study of rural primary schools⁷ showed that these pupils did better than the 1976 ORACLE sample. The figures were not directly comparable since the rural schools were likely to have had a social class advantage compared to the sample of pupils from urban and suburban schools tested in the two ORACLE studies. Estimating these likely advantages from what is known about the general relationship between social class and

achievement, it could be concluded that these rural pupils probably did no worse than the pupils tested in 1976. We therefore have evidence of no decline in progress up to the mid-1980s but then a fall by the time it was measured again in 1996. When this is coupled with the steady decline in English recorded by Davies and Brember⁵, then the deterioration in pupil performance seems to have begun around the late 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s.

Taken together, these two pieces of evidence complement each other in suggesting that the decline began around the time the National Curriculum was introduced into primary schools. Despite the aim of a broad curriculum the time available for each subject is limited because of the need to coach for the “high stakes” national tests. This places greater emphasis on teaching the mechanical and technical aspects of basic skills, so that instead of a balanced curriculum we have an increasingly impoverished one.

The National Curriculum and the professional culture

Those responsible for creating the National Curriculum originally argued that the pressure on teachers would gradually decrease once they became familiar with the programmes of study and the associated schemes of assessment. This, of course, did not happen and led to a review by Sir Ron Dearing and the introduction of “discretionary time”.⁸ At the request of the National Union of Teachers, a survey was carried out in 1995 to discover how teachers had adapted to the Dearing recommendations.⁹

The main findings were fairly predictable. Most teachers questioned the very concept of discretionary time often referring to it as “evaporated time” instead. Those who did acknowledge the term said they used the time to “top up” English and mathematics so that the scores on the National Curriculum Assessment Tests could be improved. The average amount of time recorded for English, for example, more than satisfied the present requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. Even more striking, and relevant to the particular issue of teacher professionalism, were the responses offered to the final openended question, “Is there anything else you would like to add?” We were inundated with replies, some covering more than a page. All the answers fitted into a general theme of stress, loss of control and a feeling that teaching was no longer fun. By way of illustration consider the following:

“To bring back the opportunities to develop a love of learning and a sense of fun again. I feel the National Curriculum has actually stifled opportunity for sound early educational experiences that are spontaneous and exciting.”

These comments suggest that a considerable number of teachers while coping with the demands of the National Curriculum did so without great enthusiasm. Our present survey on teachers’ working conditions suggests that

things have not improved under New Labour. Breadth and balance are further restricted with less than an hour per week on average being allocated to history, geography, art and music. Almost all the teachers' comments refer to the stresses of coping with inspection, marking, testing and record keeping. Most teachers spent over four hours of the weekend on work; few had lunch or coffee breaks. Among the younger teachers many said they were considering leaving teaching in order to *get a life*.

The National Curriculum and continuity between the stages

The impact of the various factors discussed in the previous paragraphs on the transfer of pupils from primary to secondary school is not likely to be positive. Recent evidence about transfer is, however, available from the replication of the original ORACLE research study.¹⁰ When pupils' progress was evaluated, there was evidence to suggest that transfer still results in around 40 per cent of pupils failing to make progress during the year immediately following the change of schools. These figures are not too dissimilar from those reported in the original ORACLE study 20 years previously.¹¹

The ORACLE replication study also measured motivation and enjoyment of school. In general the effects on attitudes are more marked in the older age group. Year 7 students found their first term at secondary school only marginally more enjoyable. By the end of the year, however, their enthusiasm had seriously declined. Changes in motivation were identical, irrespective of the age of transfer. Pupils were more motivated immediately after transfer, but motivation then declined during the remainder of the year. One other feature of these results deserves attention. Typically we might expect strong positive associations between pupils' academic performance, motivation and enjoyment of school, on the assumption that under-achieving pupils find school less attractive and are not motivated to work hard. But in the ORACLE replication there was a small but significant negative correlation between progress and enjoyment of school indicating that some pupils, although doing well academically, were being "turned off" school.

Conclusion: where next?

The evidence presented here suggests that whatever the benefits claimed to be derived from the introduction of National Curriculum, such as clarification of aims, improved planning and greater transparency, the negative effects of this "great experiment" outweigh the advantages. Standards have not improved; pedagogy has not shifted noticeably except in terms of classroom organisation. Many children still experience a hiatus in progress when moving from primary to secondary school and there is ample evidence that curriculum continuity has not been substantially improved and that breadth and balance has been

reduced. Perhaps most significantly, the effect of these changes has been to depress teacher morale to a point where there are serious doubts whether the numbers required for teaching future generations of pupils will be forthcoming.

The experience of a raft of curriculum reforms should have taught us one important lesson. Governments wishing to impose solutions, either in matters of pedagogy or curriculum, without taking into account the complexities facing teachers in their everyday work-lives, run the risk that, in all probability, suggested solutions will be applied uncritically in ways which cause minimum disturbance to existing practice. This seems to have been the case with the National Curriculum. Those planning the National Curriculum appeared to approach the task as an exercise in formal logic. They started at the desired end point, and then worked backwards, so that, for example, if it were thought necessary in science that pupils of a certain age should be able to understand the concept of density, then they would first have to study pressure. To do this they would need to understand forces, and for this they must be able to distinguish between mass and weight. Teachers, when planning a primary curriculum, however, tend to start at the beginning, by asking what it is a child already knows, and then seeking to expand this knowledge. Primary teachers do not now conceive of the child's mind as an empty vessel waiting to be topped up, but accept that most children have acquired, at least, a partial understanding of phenomena that they encounter in their daily lives. When adopting this "constructivist" approach, it is therefore important to leave teachers to choose the subject matter, but to establish clear frameworks within which children could gradually understand what it is to work as a scientist, historian, a writer and so on.

Thus in history it would be important within this framework that children should appreciate the nature of historical evidence, and in doing so learn how to retrieve and interpret documents from the past. To achieve this goal it appears sensible to most primary teachers to harness the children's own experience by setting the framework within the context of some local history project, rather than Julius Caesar's invasions of Britain. Leaving primary school children with these understandings, allied to a firm grasp of the so-called basic skills, would place them in an excellent position to profit from a challenging secondary curriculum.

In the view of the various subject committees charged with planning the National Curriculum, this approach appeared to be a non-starter.¹² Each committee set about the task of selecting content from the early secondary years' curriculum that was deemed suitable for primary aged children. The criteria for inclusion appeared to be, first, that it was thought by these adults to be sufficiently interesting to stimulate the pupils' imagination and, second, it formed a logical progression so that one topic built upon another. This subject matter was then incorporated into the statutory programmes of study.

This decision had two main consequences. First it created an over-prescriptive, over-crowded primary curriculum which Ron Dearing attempted unsuccessfully to rescue. Second, it left Key Stage 3 in some confusion since it was left with all that was not included in Key Stage 4 or which had not been transferred down to Key Stage 2. Not surprisingly, there was a lack of any overall clear structure or a set of principles which might have provided teachers with an explicit rationale for their lesson planning. Many Key Stage 3 teachers, having previously established a curriculum in science or history which had a degree of coherence, therefore have continued to retain this structure, and in so doing re-taught some of the work which was now part of Key Stage 2.

A possible solution would be to allow primary teachers a degree of choice in the selection of content, including the increased use of thematic approaches, but within an agreed framework requiring that certain key concepts and skills need to be embedded within a broad and balanced curriculum. Not only would this deal with the problems of overcrowding in the present programmes of study, but it would also allow teachers to situate the learning within contexts which had meaning for their pupils. At least that is what the Interim Primary Committee, a precursor of the National Curriculum subject panels, had in mind back in 1987. Perhaps it is time to go back to these past deliberations in order to plan for the future. ■

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Does art make a difference? at Dulwich Picture Gallery

Elisabeth Bartlett

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Abstract: *The visual arts can be used to enrich children's learning and improve their social skills and attitude. This article outlines the work of the Does Art Make a Difference? project which brought art to young people coping with extreme difficulties, including some with severe physical or medical disabilities. For the many children who see themselves as failing in their daily school routine, looking at fine art provides a fresh and liberating experience.*

FOR nearly two decades, educators at Dulwich Picture Gallery in southeast London have used the visual arts as curriculum enrichment both for pupils who visit the gallery, and increasingly for those who are unable to do so. Recently completed, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES)-funded *Does Art Make A Difference?* was a two-year art education outreach project, working with three extremely challenging partner sites from 1999-2001. The funding gave the gallery the opportunity to examine how the arts can be used to enrich pupils' learning in a carefully evaluated project over a period of time.

Project target groups

We chose to work with schools that had never used Dulwich Picture Gallery as a resource before, and with young people from these schools coping with extreme difficulties. Some were managing their lives, coping with severe physical or medical disabilities; others were disaffected low-achievers.

The aims of the project were to:

- Show how learning through good personal relationships succeeds;
- Enhance critical and practical skills;
- Expand imaginative thinking, encourage personal interpretation of art and broaden horizons;
- Improve confidence in discussion;
- Show vocabulary extension and conversation development;
- Develop ability to read visual symbols;
- Improve social skills and attitude;
- Increase motivation;
- Encourage repeat visits both to Dulwich Picture Gallery and to other galleries and museums;
- Increase positive self-image.

Starting out: building a relationship

This project owed its smooth running to the massive amount of pre-project preparation. Without doubt the key to success was planning and more planning. Stringent standards of professionalism and consistency created a high level of expectation for all those involved. Enough time given to such planning meant that we anticipated problems before they developed.

The inaugural series of sessions carried the burden of winning over both teachers and pupils in the schools. In a subtle way, we had to ‘win our right’ to speak; to demand our pupils’ attention. All teachers will understand how important this transaction is; that no real communication can take place without some measure of respect between giver and receiver.

What we did on outreach

We took large laminated reproductions of our old master paintings to each partner site. Some of these were left on the walls of the schools for two years and children unconsciously became familiar with the images.

Detailed observation was the essential first step, inviting response and discussion. Children were shown ‘how to look’ at a picture. It may sound obvious but this actually requires a good level of concentration and the ability to verbalise a response. Children were shown how to use detective skills to ‘decode’ the pictures. Lateral discussions were followed through as the issues of the pictures related to life today. Old master pictures do not inhabit another world; all human life is there in its majesty and misery. We noted how much the children enjoyed it.

Narrative pictures in the hands of our storyteller attracted alert concentration, obvious enjoyment and were a catalyst for discussion, artworks, poems and creative writing.

When the children finally visited the Gallery they were highly motivated to find “their” pictures among the collection. They honed in on them with an obvious feeling of ‘ownership’ and could tell us about paintings that had come up in discussion weeks back.

Practical creative art sessions based on some aspect of the pictures was the central feature of the programme. Our team of artists, each with a personal specialism, expanded the looking into making. Each pupil developed a set of skills to interpret their own creative vision.

The partner sites

1. Waverley Girls’ School, Peckham

At this inner London comprehensive school we worked with two “nurture” classes of girls who had not settled into secondary education and were on the verge of exclusion from mainstream school. These children presented the most challenging and demanding teaching requirements of the three sites. A number held special educational needs statements; many had severe behavioural difficulties and most had difficulty in reading, concentration and following directions. Many came from dysfunctional family backgrounds; for them, just getting to school was a struggle.

List of creative projects:

- Portraits and self portraits – drawing, painting and collage;
- An examination of how emotion is conveyed by colour and gesture; writing poems to add to a self-portrait;
- Wings, flight, angels and devils as the topic to produce three-dimensional figures;
- Colour mixing; a room wall-size version of a 17th century Dutch seascape was painted in a group collaboration;
- Mask-making with moving parts;
- A Van Dyck painting was transcribed as a modern cartoon;
- Block printing on fabric;
- Embroidering over printed designs, which were then sewn into a large patchwork quilt;
- Felt making.

What happened here:

One of the difficulties at Waverley School was the fact that the girls were firmly linked into peer-group gangs, which was to them more important than listening to a teacher. Rather than fighting this ‘group culture’ we decided to utilise it, devising practical art tasks that required teamwork. For example, the girls were shown how to make three-dimensional objects using willow twigs. One pupil had to hold these in place whilst another fixed them together.

Strategies like these were very successful and we began to see collaborative skills developing.

2. Thurlow Park Special School, West Dulwich

Two junior classes of boys and girls combined together made a group for programme sessions at this special school for children with severe physical and medical disabilities. Five of our students relied on wheelchairs and had very limited control of their movement. One student painted using a brush held in her mouth. Another could hold a brush, but only found the motor control to create huge, wide brush strokes. About half of the class were speech-impaired in some way; one hearing-impaired pupil was adept at communicating using signs.

List of creative projects, all linked directly with the pupils' National Curriculum topics:

- Ceramic models of landscape;
- Self-portraits in 18th century dress inspired by the Gallery paintings;
- Making and interpreting signs;
- Making conservation jars with insects and flowers;
- Making a set design of a Roman ruin;
- Collage animals;
- Body armour, helmets and shields;
- Animal puppets;
- Ceramic fruit still life;
- Papier-mache jewellery.

What happened here:

When the class from Thurlow Park Special School visited the gallery we witnessed the powerful impact which visual images can have upon children who may be 'starved' of visual stimulation due to their disability.

All the children revelled in the extra attention, in the new ideas and concepts and particularly in exploring new art materials. We learned that we had to adapt our notions of what could be achieved to the child's level of physical ability. With a lot of help and perseverance children learned greater mastery of materials and skills. Their pleasure in their achievements was unbounded and rewarding.

During our sessions pupils particularly enjoyed dressing up in the Gallery costumes for portraits – flowing dresses and robes from a bygone era covered their wheelchairs, providing a completely new self image and the opportunity to see themselves beyond their disability.

It was a privilege to develop strong relationships with these children and their dedicated teachers.

3. Orchard Lodge Resource Centre, Crystal Palace

Orchard Lodge Resource Centre is comprised of secure and open units for young male offenders and boys on remand between the ages of 13-17. Residents have committed extremely serious offences. Although 'fighters and survivors', these young men have missed or rejected opportunities for formal education. Literacy levels are extremely low; some boys have never attended school in any consistent way. Classes here were never larger than four students.

List of creative projects:

- Drawing and painting portraits, adding words to illustrate emotions;
- Designing and creating a multi-media collage "triptych" illustrating significant issues chosen by the boys;
- Drawing techniques including still life, portraits and lettering;
- Designing, cutting and making linoleum prints;
- Using colour to express emotion in painting after studying paintings on display at the Gallery by Howard Hodgkin.

What happened here:

Without doubt it was very difficult to begin. Initially the young men rejected our programme – and us. We were, after all, a totally alien concept. Despite our planning and careful selection of teachers and artists, it was a long journey before they came to accept and respect us. A subtle, yet significant development came several weeks into the programme when pupils gradually began to shake off the hoods on their sweatshirts and make eye contact with tutors as they settled down to work. At last they were secure enough to face our world and its opportunities – rather than hiding away from it.

Small class sizes meant teachers and pupils were able to enjoy an almost one-to-one relationship. We were thrilled to see pupils take on board quite complex and adult ideas; learning to talk about images and to create their own pictures with a sense of pride. The standard of the art produced was very high.

The Gallery's teaching team guided stimulating dialogue. It was particularly noticeable to one Orchard Lodge teacher that instead of everyone remaining on the level of discussing the boys' interests (admittedly important), participants had moved to a much more adult, wide-ranging discussion of issues and concepts. At the end of the sessions, pupils were engaging in discussions about art, which were far above their age level.

Following our two-year programme, there has been an increase in the number of students taking arts-related GCSE courses at Orchard Lodge and two boys began art A-level. Without doubt the outstanding success of the programme was underlined when a 16-year old participant returned to visit the Gallery in autumn 2001. This young man had moved from Orchard Lodge to another local children's home. When teachers there asked if anyone could

recommend possible places for outings, he suggested a visit to the Gallery. He convinced two friends to accompany him. The children's home has since made arrangements to bring the other residents – previously none had dreamed of visiting an old master collection.

Practical advantages of working this way:

- The responsibility is shared by a TEAM. We saw PARTNERSHIPS developed and sustained between the gallery's freelance artists; supportive and skilled school teachers and demanding but receptive pupils.
- A HIGH TEACHER/STUDENT RATIO makes it possible to provide a positive atmosphere.
- The VISUAL ARTS enable teachers to communicate with students who may be disinclined or unable to respond to conventional approaches.
- The programme created is thoroughly CROSS-CULTURAL in its scope, bringing together pupils and teachers from different backgrounds and experiences to respond to the Gallery's old master collection. Students are encouraged to reflect their different cultures in their artwork.
- The programme created is also INTERDISCIPLINARY IN APPROACH, including science, history and English with art.
- VOCABULARY EXTENSION occurs when teachers and pupils talk about the art, resulting in more mature conversation for the pupils and increased confidence in verbalising opinions and responses.
- SEEING THE REAL PICTURES on visits crowns the learning experience in all of our classes. With the exception of classes from the secure unit at Orchard Lodge, all of our pupils made Gallery visits which inspired some of the most stimulating dialogue about art, its meaning and its relationship to "real life."

Results

The learning which took place surprised and encouraged pupils, and often astounded teachers.

We saw extreme behaviour patterns modify. Initial aggression turned to acceptance and dislike of the project became desire.

At all three sites we found...

- Pupils have developed their skills of looking, understanding concepts, and articulating their ideas.
- The practical artwork has helped to increase hand to eye coordination, and fine and broad motor skills.
- Young people learned to 'read' pictures and to express their interpretations, frequently using new and improved vocabulary.
- Looking at pictures painted over 300 years ago, they discovered part of the

historical context of their cultural heritage and in the main were completely fascinated by the discovery.

- We saw pupils blossom and show increased confidence.
- Personal behaviour improved enormously as small acts of politeness became the norm.
- Attitudes improved 100 per cent for many!
- The very personal artwork produced at the three sites and pupils' obvious pride in their achievement speaks volumes.

What have we learned?

We have witnessed again and again that young people are eager to look at and think about the universal themes embodied in the Gallery's collection of old master paintings. Pupils develop a sense of what they like and see as "real art." Many quickly discover how to "read a picture" and interpret the artist's message. For many who see themselves as failing in their daily school routine, it is a fresh and liberating experience to look at fine art. ■

The Tandem Project – Inspiring the Teacher:

South West regional pilot programme 2001

Abstract: *This summary of the Tandem evaluation report focuses upon the project's main findings, based on the responses of those teachers involved. The full report includes a detailed analysis of the project's planning and organisation; the scale of teacher participation; what artists and teachers gained from the project and its relevance to teachers' professional lives.*

THE Tandem Project began in 1997, in response to concerns about the lowness of morale in the teaching profession, and the related conviction that, “teaching that is uninformed by the authority of individual creative experience is both ineffective and unfulfilling.” What Tandem proposed was that the experience of working in collaboration with practising artists would enable teachers to re-discover their creative potential and, at the same time, their commitment to educational practice and ideals.

The first Tandem pilot project took place in Devon in 1998. Though numbers were limited, the response of those who attended was highly positive, and confirmed Tandem's commitment to providing opportunities of this kind. With the support of South West Arts, Tandem's steering group was reconstituted to include a broader range of organisations, with the aim of developing a regional pilot project which would, “utilise the resources of the arts sector towards supporting and nurturing the creativity of teachers.”

Organisation

Inspiring the Teacher was funded by South West Arts, the Arts Council of England, the Regional Arts Lottery Programme, and the Esmée Fairbairn

Nick Jones

Nick Jones is an independent evaluator for the Tandem project.

Charitable Trust. A project coordinator and six Arts Education Agencies were contracted to work collaboratively on the planning, administration and marketing of the project. Proposals were invited from artists/organisations whose work was thought likely to inspire teachers and support project objectives. The final programme of 30 events was devised by the participating arts organisations or individual artists, working in collaboration with their local agency. All events were independently budgeted, and priced at realistic rates.

The programme ran from February to August 2001, and covered the full range of art-forms. Events were located across the South West, and ranged from one-day workshops to five-day residential courses. Some of the events were scheduled during term-time; the majority were at weekends or during school vacations.

The project was publicised via brochures distributed to named contacts in all schools in the region, promoting the programme's potential both in terms of teachers' individual creativity and in terms of their professional effectiveness. In addition to Tandem's own publicity, most events were also marketed independently by the organisations concerned. Tandem's Teacher Incentive Fund offered applicants a reduction in course costs of up to £100.

Participation

Thirteen of the advertised events attracted sufficient bookings to run, five of which reached capacity. To that extent, the project fell short of expectations. Cost appears to have been a key issue. The more popular courses tended to last no more than a single Saturday, and to cost somewhere between £15 and £40; very few participants attended courses requiring supply cover. The Teachers' Incentive Fund, therefore, remained significantly under spent.

Of the courses which ran, slightly more dealt with art and design than with other arts subjects. Those teachers who attended were from the full range of age groups; rather more were from secondary than from primary schools, and women outnumbered men by about three to one. Nearly half attended courses held in a different county from the one in which they lived or worked. About half had been supported financially by their schools. Asked about the thinking behind the school's support, several had defined this explicitly in relation to their curriculum work: "If it is not a statutory requirement, it is ignored."

Despite the relatively low levels of attendance, however, teachers' responses – obtained in answer to a detailed evaluative questionnaire – were remarkably positive, and present a strong case for the value and importance of opportunities of this kind.

Artists' experience

Artists' own questionnaire responses outlined a variety of approaches to the development of skills and creativity. Some set out explicitly to develop new

techniques within a specified field; some preferred to draw on the skills teachers already possessed, and to place the emphasis on experiment and “unblocking the imagination”. Some fused both these approaches.

Asked what interested them about the teachers they had worked with, the artists had found them “enthusiastic, diligent, inventive...” “They were hungry for this kind of opportunity. After so much giving out they were for once receiving...” “They seemed to find it therapeutic...” For the artists, the courses both supported their own development as tutors, and confirmed the positive nature of this form of work: “Providing the space for creativity to flourish, and then watching it flourish, is a real trip – a privilege.”

Teachers’ experience

Asked whether they saw teaching as a creative profession, most respondents gave a vigorously positive answer. But many also felt obliged to qualify this judgement: “It should be, but at the moment I feel it sucks my creativity from under me...”

In this context, attending an event from the Tandem programme contributed to the renewal of teachers’ personal creativity in a number of ways.

- Direct engagement with an artist’s own work was one valuable part of the experience: “I could begin to relate to, respect and ask questions about the work.” In a related way “the ambience of the studio”, offering physical evidence of the artists’ achievement and the kind of resources which had given rise to it, was something which teachers relished.
- Many teachers were struck by the nature of artists’ thought processes. The recurrent terms in this context were “open” and “lateral”, with an implied recognition that this was something from which many teachers had become detached: “There was an open-mindedness to his approach that I would love to communicate to our pupils.”
- Another quality which teachers found in their artist-tutors was the ability to strike up and to foster a productive working relationship: “They were wonderfully supportive. They helped me develop my own ideas rather than inflicting their ideas on me. I found the experience very liberating.”
- The sense of collaboration, both with the artist and with fellow participants, was an important element for very many teachers, though one did observe that, “it was nice to discover yourself and not have to interact...”
- Most teachers found the workshop experience challenging, and ultimately in a positive manner. “The steepness of the learning curve” was noted by several respondents, particularly those who had attempted art-forms that were largely new to them.
- Most considered that the workshop had given them new skills, but a significant number felt the experience had been as much a question of

re-learning and remembering: “It was both scary and thoroughly enjoyable to rediscover parts of my brain that have lain dormant for 20 years.”

- A related challenge was the “exposure of personal development”: “Using your creativity like that really exposes you to your colleagues, but it was extremely rewarding.” Several teachers commented how this kind of insight had affected their understanding of what pupils also experience.
- As in the case of renewing art-form skills, exploring their own creative potential was often a matter of exuberant re-discovery, as teachers realised “that it hasn’t disappeared...” The experience also developed participants’ creative confidence. Respondents had learned, for example, “That I need to be less hyper-critical and dismissive of my creativity.”
- Teachers’ involvement in the project also produced a determination to re-prioritise their personal time: “I decided I must spend more weekends doing things like this. I felt really focused and able to shut out all other pressures.”

What most needs emphasising about the teachers’ personal experience is the positive nature of what they felt they had been left with: “It was inspiring in the sense of reminding me that humans are essentially creative and have enormous potential. We don’t have to fill people with information – ‘letting go’ is an important part of learning. It created a sense of ‘I can.’”

Impact on teachers’ work in schools

While appreciating the focus on their own creative development, most teachers also saw Tandem as developing insights that they now felt inspired to pass on in the context of their professional work. “I needed to look at areas of arts provision within the school and this has given me just the jolt I needed to do it properly.” “This was definitely ‘professional development’ as it should be, on an adult level...”

Ways in which teachers thought their classroom work might be influenced by this experience included the following:

- Teachers were pleased to carry away “new directions, skills, techniques, resources” which could be “fed back into lesson plans” and used to reconstruct schemes of work.
- More generally, the experience of being “recharged” was a reminder that pupils also appreciate enthusiasm in the classroom context. “It’s given me an energy burst – so for the next few weeks I might be more exciting...”
- “Recharging” also involved “rethinking” how things are taught. One teacher thought she had learned “not to feel restricted by any scheme of work – however good”. Another felt “much more open and receptive to new ideas.”
- Once teachers had acknowledged a need to “bypass prescriptivism” in their own planning, this suggested a complementary need for pupils to “open

their minds”: “I hope to say ‘Yes – try it’ to students’ ideas, to support their experiments and shape the learning experience around them more.”

- As well as adjusting their curriculum work, teachers registered a commitment to develop pupil creativity in other, less formal, contexts, such as art clubs, drama companies and community writing projects.
- Engaging themselves in the creative process reminded teachers of the importance of providing pupils with their own opportunities for personal creativity. It offered “the confidence and knowledge to be able to guide children through a journey of experiences into creating their own [paintings], with their own feelings expressed in them.”

In addition to the main Tandem programme, South Dartmoor Community College experimented with a school-based project which began with a whole-school INSET event, and led to the establishment of a group of teachers from a range of subjects who later took part in a two-day creative workshop with Forkbeard Fantasy. The project therefore had a sustained element which the other Tandem events were unable to provide. It also increased the amount of professional interaction between staff, including the exploration of art-forms that were unfamiliar to them.

In the Forkbeard workshop, skills training was explicitly subservient to the development of creative enterprise: “They have a terrific ability to not edit at the beginning of the process, which allows for a richer, more imaginative and possibly more honest experience.”

Evaluation of the longer term effects of this project emphasised the way in which such activities had led to an opening up of students’ own creative potential, and invigorated the nature of the teacher-class relationship. The South Dartmoor project offered an indication of how professional development of this kind might serve to strengthen the creative and social ethos of a whole school over a sustained period: “Other colleges should be encouraged to have the vision to go for it, and see what it can do for staff morale.”

Impediments

Alongside the sense of renewal which the project generated, there was an underlying shadow. As one teacher wrote: “The next day, refreshed and troubled, I returned to the routines of education.”

For these teachers, the positive aspects of their professional lives emerged from direct interaction with pupils – “building firm relationships of mutual respect and enthusiasm” – and the satisfaction of witnessing the development of young people’s skills and ideas. The negative aspects were summarised by one respondent as “paperwork, over-regulation, planning and testing.” The consequent pressure of time was a perennial concern: “it becomes more

difficult the further into term it gets. The marking and the tiredness build up...” “I’m definitely reaching burn-out – I’ve been much less creative this year and more bogged down”.

As teachers perceive it, the restrictions imposed over the years by national legislation have meant that they no longer feel able to choose what and how to teach. External assessment dominates, and leads to a reduction in the range of skills and understanding thought worthy of attention. This has also led to a narrowing of teachers’ professional development. Though there has been a steady increase in the cascading of national instructions, departmental budgets for subject development have meanwhile been reduced. One respondent reflected on, “the wealth of abandoned knowledge, frozen and unused, as teachers are shepherded into whatever is currently declared to ‘work’ for all pupils in all schools.”

In this context, it is notable that a programme which offered such a range of creative opportunities, together with a generous system of subsidy, and to which participants responded in such positive terms, should have benefited teachers in such a relatively small number of schools.

Future aims

In the light of this pilot project, Tandem’s steering group now aims to:

- promote the Tandem approach and disseminate the project’s research findings;
- influence positively attitudes to teachers investing in their own creativity at national, regional and local levels;
- effect an increase in opportunities for artists and teachers to work together;
- collaborate with similar initiatives nationwide. ■

The Tandem evaluation report may be downloaded from the Tandem website at www.tandemproject.org.uk

What's this got to do with maths?

Abstract: *Using drama in education can have a productive and positive impact across the curriculum. By citing examples from classroom teaching the author demonstrates how drama can motivate both primary and secondary pupils into becoming more effective learners. For many children drama gives learning a purpose and enables them to operate and learn within a relationship that is human to human rather than one that is human to abstract concept.*

A recent article, published in *The Independent*, about New Christ School in Reading has highlighted the importance and value of using drama in education as a teaching method, and the ways in which it can contribute to raising attainment. For teachers who have been using drama as a teaching method since the 1970s, this comes as no surprise. However, as a non- National Curriculum subject, the inclusion and use of drama within the curriculum is sporadic to say the least. This is despite endless lobbying by various bodies, including professional drama associations and the recent publication of the report on the arts in education, *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*.¹

Current trends in assessment and testing mean that many of the beneficial outcomes of using drama are regarded as not worth measuring, reflecting a situation where, "... the tests determine what is educationally valuable, rather than what is educationally valuable determining the character of the assessment".² However, this article sets out to demonstrate that, although the learning achieved through drama cannot be directly measured by current assessment methods, it can have a productive and positive impact on those areas that are being measured and tested. It will identify one way in which drama can be used within the curriculum and offer an analysis of how and why it can motivate pupils to become more effective learners. The methodology is illustrated by an example of some recent teaching done with a year 10 maths class.

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Drama in education

It is important at this point to make a distinction between theatre and drama in education, or process drama, as it has become known more recently. With drama in education, drama is used as a teaching method or tool, to serve learning in other areas of the curriculum. However it does draw upon many elements of what we see in the theatre. There is a narrative driven by tension(s); roles are played out; there is exposition and resolution. However, there is no audience in the conventional sense, and the class has some control over the outcome of the narrative. The class and their teacher are both the “actors” and the “audience”.

The teaching method that is described here is based on, and adapted from, the “Mantle of the Expert” approach devised by Dorothy Heathcote, which involves, as she so aptly expresses it, “teachers and children all facing the same way”. The implication being that the teacher and pupils are involved in a collaborative relationship. The teacher is not seen as the fount of all knowledge, engaged in filling empty minds, but as someone who is leading the work from within the drama context. The teacher, as with other teaching styles, has clear learning objectives, and provides a structure, but does not supply answers. With this way of working it is the responsibility of the pupils to find solutions. Using drama as a teaching method is more commonly associated with teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2, however, it can also prove to be as effective at secondary level, as illustrated by the following example.

Drama and maths

The following account is based on some work I undertook recently with a year 10 maths class, and their maths teacher. The teacher felt that the class lacked confidence, had low self-esteem, and was capable of higher levels of achievement. She wanted to develop their questioning and thinking skills, as their main preoccupation was with arriving at the “right” answer, rather than ways of approaching a problem and the process that they needed to go through. They also found it difficult to listen to instructions and to one another.

With this in mind it was decided that a drama context would be set up where the class would be involved in an **adult** enterprise, in which they would be endowed with the power and expertise to enable them to shape and develop the work of the enterprise, and to fulfil tasks appropriate to the enterprise. In this case, the class was to become a firm of lawyers who specialised in employment law.

The tasks that this enterprise would be fulfilling were to do with resolving a dispute over the calculation of wages. The lawyer role had been selected, as it would endow the class with a high degree of status, it would give an appropriate standpoint from which to fulfil the maths tasks, and it was a role

that the class would know something about. They did not actually have to go through all the training and study involved in becoming real lawyers, they just needed to know something about the work of lawyers so that they would know the perspective that they would be working from, and the parameters that would govern their work.

In the same way as young children play at being doctors and nurses, they have no training, but understand the function that they fulfil, and the relationships based on the adult models around them, and their own experiences of life. So, the enterprise enables the class to become experts, which is the start of a shift in the pupil/teacher relationship - as it is normally the teacher who is the expert in the classroom. It is important to note that the pupils were not being asked to 'act' lawyers, and adopt the stereotypical posturing seen in TV and film courtrooms, or to develop individual characters.

More than just a game

Because process drama is more than just a game, as in the doctors and nurses example, the class needed to be focused (through a task or a series of tasks) on the skills and qualities that the role brings and understand some of the responsibility of the role. In the maths example, the class, working in small groups, were given five statements relating to the skills and qualities of their lawyer role. They were asked to consider which of the statements reflected the most important skill required to do their "job". The statements related to their skills as listeners, questioners and problem solvers, the very skills that their teacher felt needed developing. Within the fiction of the drama it was assumed that they were "expert" at the very skills that they lacked.

Implied in this "enterprise" model, are jobs to be done and tasks to be fulfilled. However, the jobs and tasks need a purpose, and as in real life, these are done in response to the needs or request of a "client".

There were two teachers involved in this project, the maths teacher and myself. The maths teacher assumed the role of an "office junior" within the law firm. This was "too lowly" a role for her to help with the client's "case", but did enable her to provide resources as they were required. The client roles were played by myself. However, it is not necessary to have two teachers to use drama, nor is it necessary for the teacher to be a drama specialist.

When working in this way, the client role is taken by the teacher, who is not behaving as the teacher, but someone who needs to call upon the expertise of the enterprise members. This is another example of the way in which the pupil/teacher relationship changes, because the teacher's role is often of a lower status than that of the class.

In the maths example the client roles were a 16 year- old wages clerk and her supervisor. The clerk had been accused by the supervisor (who had previously been the wages clerk) of overpaying the staff. The clerk was

convinced that she has been calculating the wages correctly, but was unable to provide proof of her innocence. The “lawyers” were asked if they could help and were left with some copies of “wage slips”, some of which had been calculated by the client and some by the supervisor.

The “lawyers” were then engaged in the task of checking the calculations on the wage slips. They discovered that the error had in fact been made by the “supervisor” when she had been the “wages clerk”, and involved miscalculation of tax percentages. (In fact, the error was a mistake commonly made by members of this class, and this had deliberately been included in the planning). This information was given to the wages clerk, with the advice that she should confront the supervisor. However the maths teacher wanted the class to appreciate the importance of being able to explain their workings out. The teacher in role therefore, accepted the findings but not the advice. The “clerk” wanted the “lawyers” to explain the error to the “supervisor”. The work was concluded by the “lawyers” teaching an officious and intimidating “supervisor” how to calculate percentages, as the only means of convincing her of her error.

Here the teacher was teaching, from within the drama, by withholding knowledge and using the roles’ challenge and question in order to deepen and extend the work. When in role the teacher needs to be clear about how much the role knows and does not know, so that the learning outcomes are achieved. The teacher’s role needs to be carefully chosen so that the class will relate to the client and empathise with their situation. Being accused of something that you have not done and being intimidated by adults is a situation that young people easily recognise.

Outcomes

This piece of work took place over three lessons, but the repercussions were much wider. Several members of the class felt competent and confident to successfully run the work with a year 9 class, further enhancing their self-esteem. At the end of the project the maths teacher reported a marked difference in the dynamic of the class; they were more co-operative, and started to work well with one another. They were more self-reliant and prepared to think for themselves, rather than being dependent on the teacher to provide answers. Most of the class moved from the Foundation to the Intermediate GCSE syllabus and are now predicted C/D grades, rather than the E - G grades that had been expected previously. Three of the boys in the class moved up two sets and two of the girls moved up one set.

It would be ingenuous to suggest that a class can be radically transformed purely because drama had been used as a teaching method. There are too many variable factors to make such a claim. Nonetheless, the use of drama had led to a successful outcome and must have been a contributory factor. The

maths teacher maintains that she has not changed her teaching style and the outcomes of this work coincide with other experiences too numerous to mention, including those at New Christ School in Reading.

Why can drama lead to successful teaching and learning?

Firstly, drama provides a vehicle or context for teaching and learning through the fiction that is established. The learning is given a purpose; skills can be developed, applied or consolidated, but not just for their own sake. The circumstances within the fiction impose an imperative that the skills **need** to be learned or applied, and therefore the class will **want** to learn them. This need is internally perceived by children, not just externally imposed. Therefore, they have a personal investment in completing tasks and are more likely to be engaged on an effective level because they “feel” for the role(s) and situation. There is a tension that needs to be resolved, and it is their responsibility to determine an outcome.

Drama, then, can offer a powerful stimulus in motivating children to learn as they are operating within a relationship that is human- to- human, rather than one that is human- to- abstract concept. It is this that acts as the lure to draw members of the class in and enables them to see the relevance of the learning. In the example cited, the class became very involved in the life of the wages clerk, wanting to know more about her than they needed to know in order to help her with the problem. They identified with her and empathised with her situation. Their teacher noted that the class were completely self motivated and were enthusiastically engaged in calculating the wage slips and working on percentages without any encouragement from her. In fact, some of the class wanted to know, “what’s this got to do with maths”?

There are many children who have an “I can’t” stance to learning for most of their school life. Working through drama means that the children have to assume an “I can” approach because of the status and skills that they have as experts within an enterprise. This is reinforced by the “I can’t” approach adopted by the teacher in role. The teacher is withholding his/her knowledge and understanding. With this way of working it is the teacher in role who does not know and the pupils who are empowered to know.

Drama In education appeals to all learning styles, visual, aural and especially kinaesthetic. This is particularly relevant for those pupils who are less likely to succeed academically, where abstract concepts need to be made concrete. We are all more likely to understand and remember when we have the opportunity to “do”. In this example the class were active learners who were given sole responsibility to find solutions to the problem.

In addition, drama is a social art form. It is a collective, collaborative, creative process. The relationship between the group and the individual is at its core. Therefore by necessity, drama encourages the development of social

skills, including: listening and response, empathising, leadership, evaluation of own work and the work of others, reflection, self discipline, willingness to take risks, questioning and challenging, confidence in self, awareness of own strengths and weaknesses, taking responsibility and awareness of the needs of others.

And perhaps most importantly, children find drama enjoyable. ■

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Education for a high-knowledge era

Abstract: *People living and working in tomorrow's highly information-rich society are likely to need a number of principal skills. Creativity will be vital, with employees needing to display new patterns of knowledge deployment derived from more flexible thinking. It is essential that we start to design an education system that is better tailored towards tomorrow's needs by encouraging creativity across all areas of learning.*

In the wake of the deeper issues raised by the recent Green Paper on a 14-19 phase, we should start to design an education system that is better tailored to the probable needs of the citizens and intellectual workers of tomorrow's highly information-rich, and even faster-changing, society. The challenge is becoming urgent. It is a full decade since the prophetic US liberal economist, Lester Thurow, warned:

“in the century ahead, natural resources, capital and new-product technologies are going to rapidly move around the world. People will move – but more slowly than anything else. Skilled people become the only sustainable competitive advantage”.¹

In this now much-debated “globalised” environment, it is becoming clearer that we must invest and organise ourselves today to generate those skills – generic and specific – which the coming generation will require to pursue individual and social progress. A process of careful identification and promotion of the principal skills involved should therefore help to shape present thinking on the development of our school curriculum.

The UK is certainly behind the game in adult skills at this stage. The Cabinet Office Performance and Innovation Unit (PIU) famously reported last autumn that the learning principle itself is still not a key factor in the culture

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of a wide range of our private and public sector organisations.² Indeed, remarkably for these computer-dominated times, a fifth of the country's population remains functionally illiterate and the national level of workforce training is just not growing. Much, therefore, depends on the next generation and its eventual capacity for achieving higher economic productivity and enhanced social cohesion if Britain is to remain a relatively prosperous and culturally influential set of nations in an integrating world.

What skills are people likely to require in 2027?

An “information explosion”, driven by significant advances in electronic (and tomorrow perhaps biotechnological) communication systems is clearly visible. The worldwide web is already accessed by a rapidly growing proportion of humanity, via desktops, laptops, palmtops and mobile phones. The point is approaching where it will be common to carry and use some small device (worn on the wrist?) providing full internet access and a range of useful interactive functions. Everyday conversations, and future team meetings in organisations, whether “virtual” or face-to-face, will surely not be lacking in factual background and data. Knowledge will abound.

Using the knowledge

The citizen-worker in that kind of technological environment will, above all, need to be creative, displaying new patterns of knowledge deployment derived from more flexible thinking. A predilection for intellectual innovation will be a key asset in driving forward across the “shifting sands” of larger information flows affecting every sphere of life.

Management consultants are already telling us that highly adaptable people, capable of speedy risk calculation and associated decision-taking, are in short supply but are sorely needed by modern industries and services. One side effect is the rapid growth of dedicated “headhunting” agencies, looking to poach from the limited pool currently available.³ The solution, however, must lie in widening that pool.

Viewed against this backdrop, public awareness of certain limitations within the present curriculum is spreading. In his latest annual report, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools noted, for example, that “attention to the teaching of literacy and numeracy is essential and many schools combine this with an appropriately broad curriculum. However, in some primary schools, the arts, creative and practical subjects are receiving less attention than previously. This risks an unacceptable narrowing of the curriculum pupils receive”.⁴

Creativity

Central government is well aware of the problem. Three years ago, the much-publicised report of the National Advisory Committee on Creative and

Cultural Education (NACCCE) sharply underlined the extent of the challenge to be faced: “new technology offers unprecedented opportunity for young people to broaden horizons; to find new modes of creativity and to deepen their understanding of the world around them ... Creativity is not unique to the arts. It is equally fundamental to advances in the sciences, mathematics, technology, in politics, business and in all areas of everyday life. ... Promoting creative and cultural education is not a simple matter. It will involve a gradual review of the styles, purpose and ethos of education at many levels”.⁵

The report itself, commissioned by ministers, added, “this is not an option, but a necessity”. A new level of debate over these themes was initiated, related pilot projects supported by the Department for Education and Skills commenced in England, and interesting curricular developments followed in Northern Ireland.

Internationally, of course, there are a number of worthwhile initiatives and experiments in creative education which have attracted attention, principally but not exclusively in urban centres of North America. Some of these were usefully outlined in the 1999 Demos report, *The Creative Age*,⁶ ranging from the efforts of the Harlem Educational Activities Fund (HEAF) in New York to bring

A high-knowledge economy requires a workforce with rather different skills from those of the mass-production era which helped to shape our conventional school and college system.

high aspirations and modern life skills to younger black children to help them go on to secure places in respected high schools, to the University of Waterloo's reputation in Canada for new forms of co-operative networking with workplaces to assist their students in exploring new possibilities and linkages.

In Britain today, the allocation of £50 million of government funding to launch the “Curriculum Online” project from this September, ultimately designed to offer the entire school curriculum (and more) through up-to-date electronic media to schools and homes, inevitably brings the era of creative education much nearer. Modern educational technology – electronic whiteboards, more inter-active software, multi media presentations – encourages more creative and original approaches by its very nature. The significant degree of flexibility it provides allows students to adapt their own learning to their desired pace and other individual needs, hopefully guided by supportive teaching and assisted by relevant technical back-up. This opens the door to the new and more diverse forms of teaching and learning we will need in order to promote creative modes of thinking.

The brain process

How do we start to identify the essential features of creative thought? We have been aware for some decades now of the basic features of the human brain and its functioning. A series of scientific advances have demonstrated that, in brief, the left side of the brain is primarily concerned with narrower, logical calculations and processes, while the right side tends to be involved with broader and spatial relationships. These functions complement each other, and most day-to-day human activity requires regular and complicated interactivity between these two sides. Creating new ideas usually involves both an element of rational deduction and some expression of emotions. The issue of creative education, in consequence, is not confined to any one subject or even grouping of subjects. Creativity can therefore be encouraged in all areas of learning. It is a common enough occurrence in the “logical” field of mathematics for pupils to recreate the wonder of a discovery actually made long before by a historic figure – for example, to look at patterns in number or in shape and rediscover a mathematical form like the “limacon” which the artist Albrecht Durer first generated in the 16th century. After all, most students do possess creative potential, even though they may be less than confident about finding and expressing it, and may need to discover their own “comfortable” field to display their real strengths.

In the memorable words of Oxford mathematician, Roger Penrose, “it seems clear to me that the importance of aesthetic criteria applies not only to the instantaneous judgements of inspiration, but also to the much more frequent judgements that we make all the time in mathematical (or scientific) work.”⁷. Rigorous argument, he adds, is normally the last step! “Before that, one has to make guesses, and for these, aesthetic convictions are enormously important – always constrained by logical argument and known facts”. What does this vital interactivity imply for the future success of our schools?

The curriculum

Reforming the compulsory school curriculum to encourage greater innovation in the application of knowledge, in the specific context of the UK’s national curricula (given their highly structured forms) involves some review of the breadth of subjects included, the methods of assessment demanded, and the relationship between disciplines traditionally viewed as discrete.

While the degree of national consistency secured through a high number of specified subjects carries distinct advantages, this dominant feature can make it harder to develop the diversity in teaching activities and the techniques required. Inter-disciplinary approaches will be necessary (despite the considerable organisational implications of this factor, for example for timetabling), since greater depth and extended vision will need to be encouraged. As Professor Ken Robinson notes in his latest book, “creative insights often occur by making connections between ideas and experiences

that were previously unconnected. Just as intelligence in a single mind is interactive, creativity is often interdisciplinary”⁸.

This issue of moving towards more inter-disciplinary teaching is, in turn, linked to the practical task of defining and building new and effective forms of teamwork for teaching staffs and managers. In addition, the student’s capacity to apply speculatively what he or she learns, in a variety of separate disciplinary contexts, requires a generally supportive environment and considerable confidence in the professional staff team.

In the opening stages of such a major reform, the longstanding imbalance within our curriculum between the “arts” and the “sciences”, with the latter traditionally prioritised as more directly related to socially valuable, practical and economic activity, will at last be open to redress. A high-knowledge economy requires a workforce with rather different skills from those of the mass-production era which helped to shape our conventional school and college system. In that sense, the concepts of “cultural” and “creative” education are powerfully linked phenomena.

Not that everything must wait upon comprehensive national debate and reform. Two hours of PE can assist if time is included for dance, and up to seven slots for English and literacy can embrace drama, both separately and within English teaching. Certain opportunities to be more creative can indeed be found within the core curriculum, a prospect significantly extended by ICT, the foundation subjects and RE.

The National Association of Educational Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants, naturally concerned for the future progress of our school system and the specific contribution which external school improvement services can make to help schools implement relevant changes, has tried to stimulate the necessary debate over creative education. Articles and book reviews in our publications, and speeches at meetings, have highlighted this theme and placed NAEIAC in the expanding ranks of those organisations favouring related aspects of curriculum reform.

A widespread, and influential, coalition of such bodies is certainly capable of being constructed, able to enter into useful dialogue with the various government departments involved. There are major business, trade union, educational, parents’ and cultural interests which already understand the basic need to equip the next generation with the survival skills demanded by the high-knowledge society and economy evolving in front of our eyes. In this essential debate, their voices will be raised and heard. ■

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Why philosophy with children?

Abstract: *As economies become more knowledge-based it is vital that our education system supports and challenges children to think for themselves. This article examines the role that philosophy can play in developing children's thinking skills and stresses the importance of establishing a learning dialogue between teachers and children. It also looks at how philosophy can be used to develop and strengthen emotional and spiritual intelligence.*

WHEN people are first introduced to the idea of philosophy with children, they are often dismissive. What is the point of teaching children philosophy when the curriculum is already overcrowded, and to what purpose? They envisage lessons on existentialism, or the life and thoughts of Schopenhauer. The first point to make, therefore, is that this is practical philosophy – it is about the process, not the teaching of facts. We are not interested in facts about Kant, Wittgenstein, or even Socrates, but we are interested in the process of exploring philosophical questions through Socratic questioning. It is the dialogue that is important!

Raising pupil attainment is something that is currently of high political profile and, consequently in a climate of constant testing and league tables, is never far from the consciousness of either individual teachers or school managers. Raising attainment has been described as requiring effective teaching, and tackling the barriers to learning. These will depend on at least four factors:

- The extent to which early years experiential deficits are analysed and addressed;
- The extent to which there is a focus on the processes of learning and teaching;
- The extent to which learning and teaching is harmonised with the way in which the brain works;

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- The extent to which children are supported and challenged to think for themselves.

In terms of raising pupil attainment, these might be looked upon as something like the tiers of a wedding cake, with each level somewhat dependent on the others. Also, however, it should be realised that attainment can only be raised to a certain level with each strategy. Therefore for each child to reach full potential, the final level of developing improved thinking skills must be accessed, and this is where a “philosophy with children” programme is of great benefit.

The importance of dialogue

It was earlier stated that the crux of such a programme is dialogue (or dialectic to use the Socratic term). This is much more than mere conversation, and offers the exciting possibility that one’s own ideas and perceptions may change in the process. To use the jargon, this process begins to develop a “community of enquiry”, wherein teacher and pupils learn and develop together. Following the introduction of a stimulus such as a story or poem, philosophical questions are formulated from which the dialogue is derived. The key to developing good dialogue is the skill of the facilitator in asking good, open-ended questions and encouraging the children to develop the same. These will include such questions as:

- Can you say more about that?
- What makes you say that?
- Do you have any evidence for that view?
- How do you know that?
- Why? Why? Why?
- Is it possible to know if that is true?
- Does anyone else support that view?
- If...then what do you think about...? and so on.

It is through this process of dialogue that many things begin to take place. Thinking skills are developed. These include :

1. Information Handling – processing skills about analysing, interpreting, locating.
2. Enquiry – Posing and defining problems, planning, predicting, testing conclusions.
3. Reasoning – giving reasons for opinions, making deductions, making judgements informed by evidence.
4. Creative Thinking – generating ideas, being imaginative in thinking, being

innovative.

5. Evaluation – evaluating what is read or heard, developing criteria for judging.

In the next 10 to 15 years, one of the effects of globalisation will be that economies will become more and more knowledge-based. If we do not have young people who can think well, the effect will be felt across the whole country; besides which, those young people will not have been allowed to reach their full potential. It is vital that our education system begins to not only allow children to think, but teaches them to think. We spend so much effort teaching children the content of the subjects but do not actually teach them how to think, how to learn. If we do not change that, it will have tragic consequences. So, we must give children time to think, we must teach them to think, and we must challenge them to think! Philosophy plays a big part in this.

Emotional Intelligence

Life, of course, is not only about the economic well-being of the individual or the community, and this brings us to the second great strength of a “philosophy with children” programme – it develops and strengthens the emotional intelligence. Daniel Goleman³ quotes studies that show that a youngster’s life chances are at least as much affected by emotional intelligence (EQ), as they are by IQ.

These intelligences include:

1. Self-Awareness – knowing how/what you are feeling and how it impinges on your work; having a realistic awareness of one’s abilities.
2. Self-Regulation – handling emotions so they facilitate the task in hand; being conscientious.
3. Motivation – knowing what motivates us, persevering in the face of setbacks; striving to improve.
4. Empathy – sensing what other people are feeling, using that information in our dealings with them; being able to have a rapport with a wide range of people.
5. Social Skills – reading social situations, using skills to persuade, lead, negotiate.

As parents, as a society, we are not only concerned about how smart our children are, but what kind of people they grow up to be. When children explore moral and ethical questions, and look at different values in the philosophy programme, they begin to explore their own ideas, thoughts, behaviours – and there opens up the possibility of even seeing the causes for these. This is a very empowering process because it brings the youngster to a

point where choice is possible instead of habitual behaviour. This is real learning. It begins to have an effect on the whole community, whether that community is a family, a class, a school, or indeed society itself. For example, how do we get a just society? Imposing rules (laws) from the outside does not seem to work too well! It is better when the regulation comes from the inside, with each citizen being self-regulated through having the self-knowledge to make informed choices. Teaching about citizenship is also politically high profile at the moment – how much better when it is not just another set of facts, but part of a process of discovering what it is like to be a citizen. Philosophy can play a powerful role in this.

Spiritual Intelligence

The third main strength of the philosophy programme is that it develops Spiritual Intelligence (SQ).

This includes :

1. Having vision and values.
2. Seeing holistically – that is seeing the unity of things around us.
3. Being “field independent” – being able to work against convention
4. Being spontaneously adaptive – being able to learn as situations are developing and use that information to affect the situation.

This aspect is seen as being further along the spectrum from emotional intelligence. It is about knowledge of myself, not as a collection of attributes, but in essence. Not myself, but my Self – that which I am.

As Chief Seattle, a Suquamish chief, said in 1854, “The earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that connects us all. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.” Hopefully we

can all move towards being as spiritually intelligent as he was!

As very young children begin to explore the world around them, they touch, smell, and even taste everything and anything they can get their hands on. As they move into the world of language they

begin to ask questions about everything – why? why? why?... There is a natural spirit of enquiry that seeks to know, “What is this creation and what is my relationship to it?”. Little philosophers abound! Unfortunately, in most cases this natural curiosity is largely knocked out of them by being ignored or told not to ask silly questions. The philosophy programme with children seeks

We spend so much effort teaching children the content of the subjects but do not actually teach them how to think, how to learn.

to restore what is in fact absolutely natural, and build on this as cognitive development allows – then a “community of enquiry” is born. In this, children learn about the process of learning, and also about themselves as learners.

Besides pupil development, the process helps create powerful professionals who can naturally transfer the method to other curricular areas. Again, it is about the process of learning, not about imparting information.

In Clackmannanshire (Central Scotland), a programme is underway to introduce a philosophy programme for eight to 11 year olds in every primary school in the authority. A detailed study is underway to monitor its effectiveness, but already the anecdotal evidence is good. Teachers have talked about how the quality of writing is improving as dialogue has developed and of noticing changes in the class ethos. In one class containing a child with major behavioural problems, the teacher reported that the class were beginning to discipline the child, by letting her know what was and was not acceptable to them. Another girl out for a walk with her father spoke of starting a dialogue with him on the nature of beauty. This is not a leafy suburb, but an area of high unemployment and deprivation.

One sees that that a “philosophy with children” programme strengthens and develops the cognitive abilities and emotional literacy. It is a very powerful vehicle which empowers youngsters to become better learners and “better”, more fulfilled people. ■

Readers wishing to know more about philosophy with children, or details of the programme used in Clackmannanshire may contact Paul Cleghorn by e-mail at paulcleghorn@aol.com . The Society for the Advancement of Philosophical Enquiry with Children (SAPER), may be contacted through the chairperson rogersutcliffe@onet.co.uk .

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Expeditions: voyages of hours or years

Richard Fawcett

Richard Fawcett is former President of the Secondary Heads Association (SHA)

Abstract: *Co-curricular activities can provide pupils with valuable experience. Opportunities provided at school can also lead to life-long interest and skills. Rather than being a series of one-off experiences, co-curricular activities are integrated into a well thought out school structure. This article looks at the co-curricular partnership programmes that have been developed by World Challenge Expeditions and shows how the programmes' aims relate to the National Curriculum.*

I have a nagging doubt. If I were a contestant on “Who Wants to be a Millionaire?” and smiling Chris Tarrant asked me a question about, say, Status Quo, or the number of stars in the Milky Way, even if I thought I knew, would the pressure of the occasion overcome me? And what would everyone say if I only managed to win £100?

Does it matter? No, not really! There is, however, another nagging doubt that just the same answer might be given about some things I once taught. All those years I spent teaching the difference between barchans and seif dunes as the keen geographer? And adiabatic lapse rates and the coalfields of the UK? Were these things so important?

Learning today

The National Curriculum was designed to bring cohesion into the experiences of young people: content, skills, and outcomes. Before that, teachers spent a great deal of time drawing up their own curriculum models and examining them. I still feel pleased at the creativity we then achieved, and have more than once felt the hairs rising on the back of my neck at accusations related to those times of laissez-faire and lack of standards in teaching.

It is perhaps surprising that the recent Green Paper is still seeking, long after the introduction of the National Curriculum, greater continuity at 14-19.

Surprising too that, if you look at university Curriculum 2000 web sites that set out admissions requirements, you find little practical encouragement in the grades demanded of students who have broadened their academic profile by studying AS level subjects. Perhaps even more worrying is that key skills still have an optional status attached to them, desirable but not essential, and that the three “wider” key skills of working with others, improving own learning and performance, and problem solving are little mentioned at all. While that is understandable in terms of the variety of status and provision in schools, it still says, loud and clear, a great deal about their perceived value in comparison with academic subjects. Even if self dunes do not, geography and all the other subjects live on!

You can get uneasy if you think hard about the future of schools and what is taught in them. To what extent would you agree that our current education system was designed for a time and purpose that no longer exists? Why do too many members of society feel disengaged from learning? Why does everyone have to take GCSEs at the same time when they are in year 11? We know all too well that our future economic and societal success in the global context is dependent on the quality of our education system. So why is it that we cannot find or retain the teachers we know we need?

Above all, what is important for young people both to be taught and to experience while at school?

What is important for days beyond school?

To be able to read well is vital and always will be. To be numerate is as important. To know how to learn, and to have learned a body of knowledge to prepare you for all the years after school is undeniably right, even if there is some debate about just what the content should be. Straightforward so far. Are the co-curricular experiences, those beyond the classroom, important? If we look back, the chances are we will have clear and highly valued personal memories of music, drama, sport, fieldwork and expeditions in the UK or abroad.

Opportunities provided at school lead to life-long interest and skills. A school summer walking holiday in the Swiss Alps and a school skiing trip were the sparks of two of my long-term enthusiasms. My two sons have become adults delighting in travel to remote areas: this came as a result of their involvement in expeditions at school. If they had not experienced them then, I doubt if they would have since travelled to Greenland, the Canadian wilderness, Brazil or Namibia.

As a teacher, fieldwork went along with the classroom geography. I only understood years later why the sixth form christened me “Maxwell” as I wielded my geological hammer! Of course, Chris Tarrant would know why! The ski trips I ran gradually enabled me to put trust in the instructor who said

“Come on!” as I faced a precipitous slope that seemed steeper than I could manage. Random opportunities taken! Many others I missed: the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Scheme, scouting, expeditions... a long list.

These activities do provide fantastic memories. They are also of real educational value and can even raise achievement in academic studies: research has shown just that. They last a lifetime. They open doors. They become valued beyond their initial worth.

In a school, rather than a series of one-off experiences, they are valuable enough to be drawn together into a well thought out school structure.

The WCE Co-Curricular Partnership

In the area of outdoor education, World Challenge Expeditions (WCE) has developed a unique concept, the Co-Curricular Partnership. Working in individual schools, the Partnership draws together the outdoor education opportunities available for young people to produce a coherent structure of provision. Successful pilots were run in 2000-2001 with national availability from September 2001. What young people should have the chance to experience in the area of leadership and development training throughout their time at school, in addition to their academic work, is what the Co-Curricular Partnership seeks to define.

For schools, outdoor education is precisely the area where opportunities are often increasingly difficult to provide, perhaps because staff do not have the time with all the other pressures they face, or indeed lack the skills and qualifications increasingly demanded by safety standards. The development of leadership, teamwork and service opportunities are at the heart of every programme.

The Co-Curricular Partnership process

Just exactly what is involved in setting up a Co-Curricular Partnership? The whole process starts with a free consultation day with no ensuing commitment. Discussions take place between an experienced WCE school programme manager and school staff providing out-of-classroom activities, pastoral heads, head of sixth form, and staff involved in the teaching of key skills, citizenship and personal and social education. The aim is to identify areas within school where there are opportunities for students to take responsibility and ownership of activities, which promote their own personal development and enhance leadership qualities.

An extensive consultancy report is produced which identifies the current level of provision of leadership and development training available to students and how this relates to the school ethos. The report outlines areas for discussion focusing on streamlining current provision and suggestions for improvement and expansion into areas not covered to benefit students

throughout their school career.

The Partnership process is designed to be creative, designing a coherent structure of provision for each age group. Available for students from six to 19 years, the Co-Curricular Programme builds on existing skills, creating a structured range of outdoor opportunities in every year group. An added benefit is that students can count their WCE experiences towards the Duke of Edinburgh's Award by having them validated by WCE Leaders who are accredited assessors.

The new programmes work in conjunction with current provision, not in competition with it. They are as carefully thought out as any National Curriculum syllabus. So too is the funding of the Partnership. There is free and subsidised staff training. The school programme manager ensures continuity with the school and there are no burdens placed on the school infrastructure. All equipment is provided.

Where needed, WCE manages the funding and suggests funding methods that are available. To make the programmes available to all, a tried and tested money management programme is available in schools where students contribute to the cost of the programme. Alternatively, finance is organised direct with parents, or the school leadership team helps in identifying suitable project funding streams.

The WCE suite

There is no doubt that the aims of WCE fulfil the aims of the National Curriculum in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and preparing all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. Responding positively to opportunities, challenges and responsibilities, managing risk, and coping with change and adversity are at the heart of programmes. In fact, WCE sees each programme as an expedition whether a day or month long, in school or out. Courses the programmes are not! They offer students expedition objectives, genuine

If we look back, the chances are we will have clear and highly valued personal memories of music, drama, sport, fieldwork and expeditions in the UK or abroad.

ownership and an environment that allows them freedom to develop.

Many schools have known WCE for Team Challenge, expeditions to over 40 destinations worldwide. There is also First Challenge for years 8, 9, and 10 – eight day expeditions in Poland, Greece, Morocco, Turkey and Jordan. The Secondary Heads Association's work in Namibia is supported with

expeditions based on the Team Challenge model – SHA Campaign Namibia. Individuals can also go on their own programmes independent of school. Finally, Leadership Challenge, run with schools and in Education Action Zones, has UK based expeditions for all 9-18 year olds and Gap Challenge offers worthwhile gap year opportunities to students.

The creativity and impact of WCE programmes

One-day on-site expeditions for whole year groups; week long expeditions for a group of year 10 students in mountains to develop motivation and leadership; a two day on-site expedition for a whole sixth form to develop teamwork, time management and responsibility; and a week long expedition at a residential centre for year 7 students aimed at developing confidence, are examples of the opportunities that have been successfully run and that can be integrated into the Co-Curricular Partnership. The key is flexibility, being able to design expeditions to meet defined requirements.

WCE works with more students in this country than it takes overseas. Of particular interest is the work undertaken with 15 Education Action Zones. Does the provision have an impact? A research project led by Professor Murray Saunders from the Centre for the Study of Education and Training at the University of Lancaster has begun to look at the educational value of the programmes run in them.

The research shows direct links with the National Curriculum. There was a direct contribution, for example, to key skills (particularly communication, problem-solving and working with others), outdoor elements of the PE curriculum, to the newly introduced citizenship curriculum, and to PSE and the development of social skills. Students who were not successful in terms of the National Curriculum found success in the opportunities the WCE programmes provided.

The first phase of evaluation was encouraging:

“.. overall, the WCE programmes have been very well received both by teachers and by pupils. Pupils are overwhelmingly positive about the programme and their most common comment is “brilliant”. Teachers are similarly positive and the WCE experience is highly valued as offering unique and important opportunities for social, physical and intellectual enrichment.”

The activities were seen as worthwhile, challenging and pitched at the right level. They were varied according to the age group and ability level of students and were appropriate for all ages, primary to senior levels.

The pupil gains were significant. The report concludes that benefits included raised self-esteem, greater confidence, and, for some, profound

changes in behaviour and attitude towards the school.

Just being given the opportunity to succeed, for some students the first time they felt this had been on offer to them, along with the enjoyment of working in a team contributed to Professor Saunders concluding:

“While it is difficult to quantify the results of all these experiences, teachers felt that such positive experiences of the school environment were bound in time to impact upon attitudes towards school to some degree.”

Nagging doubts? Yes, they are still there about Status Quo and the Milky Way! But not about the value of the creative Co-Curricular Partnership in developing students' skills for the future. ■

More than just a game

John Shiels

John Shiels is the Technical Director of Coaching for Bobby Charlton Soccer Schools.

Abstract: *The opportunity to participate in organised activity is important for a child's individual growth and development. Bobby Charlton Soccer Schools have attempted to appeal to young people by introducing activities which engage them, while also developing them mentally, physically and socially. This article looks at how Bobby Charlton Soccer Schools have utilised the power of soccer to motivate children across a wide spectrum of educational activity, including literacy and numeracy.*

Like many of you who are reading this article, I spent a great deal of my youth playing football on the streets, in the playground, in the park or staying behind after school. Many of the games I played in were epics. I remember as a young boy emulating my boyhood heroes. One week when I was ten, I played in an FA Cup Final on a Saturday, before playing in the Home Internationals culminating in an end of season game against Scotland. The games were always full of activity, energy and excitement. They were the stuff that dreams were made of and they taught me many lessons in those formative years that have helped me since. I learnt how to get on with people, how to discuss really important issues, like was it a corner or was it a goal kick? I learnt how to look after myself. The game has been integral to my development.

Unfortunately our children cannot experience the extent of freedom once enjoyed. This, together with the additional stress that they experience at school, through all elements of testing, means that the opportunity to participate in organised activity is even more important for the modern child's individual growth and development.

Because of the better channels of communication, the advanced state of technology and the opportunity to travel, many of our children are far more sophisticated than previous generations. Consequently, the services that are offered have to be packaged in a way that seems appealing to them. With so many choices available, the product that is delivered has to be one that children want, not what adults think they should have.

As a company, Bobby Charlton Soccer Schools have taken many elements into consideration before arriving at a product which we think addresses many of these requirements.

Meeting aspirations

We began by looking at the profile of the children who would be interested in booking on to our courses. Those children who possess excellent football skills are catered for by the provision made by professional clubs, so we had to create a product which catered for the other 99 per cent of children who love playing the game.

We looked at sport provision in general and realised that to a great extent the mode of delivery had not really changed much, despite the fact that the needs and aspirations of our youngsters have. We needed a product which would engage the children and develop them, mentally, physically and socially. We arrived at a concept which we call the “Soccer Theme Park”. This is innovative coaching equipment which, when assembled, creates a real “wow factor” with children and parents alike. Dribbling mannequins, mini arenas, inflatables, laser guns, free kick walls – we create an environment which allows all participants to dream. On the free kick wall they can be David Beckham (who incidentally is an ex skills winner of ours). In the mini arena they can pounce like Michael Owen, and dribble around the mannequins like Ryan Giggs.

We use the different elements of equipment and create an activity based process, so that youngsters are continually stimulated and motivated by the constant change of activity. We found that this also addresses the issue of the fitness of the participants. Children who attend our courses actually extend themselves physically, probably more so than they have ever done, but because

We looked at sport provision in general and realised that to a great extent the mode of delivery had not really changed much, despite the fact that the needs and aspirations of our youngsters have.

of the type of activity and enjoyment value experienced they are able to cope.

Part of our philosophy is that children need to enjoy themselves. If we can create this, we believe that children will learn quicker, retain for longer, and be enthusiastic about asking for more.

Bobby Charlton Soccer Schools (BCSS) have been active through various sponsorships in education since the early 1980s. TSB Bank, The Sega Schools Challenge, The Manchester United/ESFA Football Tournament, are a few of the projects undertaken. We rely heavily on our staff base which is carefully

selected. As a pre-requisite staff need to be qualified by the Football Association or indeed UEFA. We then have our own training and assessment programme. Consequently the majority of coaches are good communicators, have an empathy towards the needs of the children in their group, have good football knowledge and are able to control and discipline the environment of which they are a part.

The atmosphere of all our activities is one which is relaxed and informal but disciplined. We find that the children respond more positively when they feel safe and secure.

Football as a game is enjoying great popularity. With the growth of girls'/women's football it now means that it really is a sport for everyone to enjoy. It possesses a glamour which youngsters aspire to.

Across the curriculum

At BCSS we have utilised the power of the game in motivating children across a wide spectrum of educational activity.

We created a collection of six books across Key Stage 1 and 2 which were geared toward football numeracy. The books were published by Oxford University Press and enjoyed great success, receiving rave reviews from children and their parents. We also worked alongside children's publisher, Usborne, to create the Usborne Soccer School which was very graphic, but contained quite complex language. The books would have motivated many young boys to read to find out how to perform certain skills.

On a more general development stage, we have just recently finished working with BBC Worldwide on a project called Goal which will use football to teach English as a second language. We have great support for this from overseas students during the summer. This will be distributed throughout the world, with major markets in Asia, South America and Europe.

We have also worked with the British Army as a part of their recruitment resource. We created a series of objective team tests that would highlight areas of personal development. The target age group for this was Key Stage 4 students. The tests highlighted and presented opportunities for elements of team building, which included communication, leadership, motivation, tolerance, mutual respect and other personality traits necessary to become a good soldier.

We have recently finished a three-year sponsorship with Sky TV. The Sky Soccer Roadshow was utilised to motivate youngsters within Education Action Zones (EAZs) around the country. We based selection into the Soccer Schools with either maintained or improved attendance. We found that by assisting schools in meeting objectives, without undue additional work for teachers or a drain on resources, that the educational sector was very receptive. The Sky Soccer Roadshow was one which enjoyed great success because it worked for

everyone – pupils, teachers, schools, EAZs and parents.

As with education, BCSS is forever evolving. We are constantly looking to develop services which can assist schools and pupils. We are presently developing a sports science module that can be used specifically for PE or tourism and leisure students but more generically for the Healthy Schools Initiative. This will entail the use of high tech equipment staffed by qualified sports scientists, which can be brought either to schools or schools could visit one of our residential sites based in the North West.

Citizenship is another curriculum area we are exploring. Hopefully, through this article, it has become apparent how we can utilise the game and its values to promote good behaviour and personal development.

When I decided to leave teaching, something I really loved and enjoyed, I did so because I had a vision that I could do much more with football than as part of the PE curriculum.

During my time within BCSS we have probably had in excess of 500,000 children participate at some level. For most of them they will have enjoyed a positive experience which will assist them in many ways. Just like the 10-year old boy who used to play in the FA Cup Final between the drains in his street. ■

Creating a learning society

Rachel Jupp

Rachel Jupp is a researcher at Demos.

Abstract: *We are currently witnessing a dramatic transformation of the economic structures of society. For the first time in history, knowledge is the primary source of economic productivity and the emblem of individual employability. This article outlines the radical changes that we must make to our education system if we are to equip children with the skills that they will need to succeed in this new age.*

THE way we live, work and learn is changing. The skills and knowledge that business and society demand stand in contrast to the priorities on which the education system was originally designed. Our learning systems, our curriculum and assessment models, our teaching methods, and the whole culture of education and learning demand radical change if Britain is going to be adequately equipped for the emerging knowledge-based economy.

For the first time in history, knowledge is the primary source of economic productivity. It is the core resource for organisations; it permeates our products and services; it is the emblem of individual employability. Technological progress, organisational change and intensified global competition are driving a shift from manual work to “thinking” jobs and the need for a new range of skills, from problem-solving and communication, to information and risk management and self-organisation. Most important is the capacity for continuous learning – the ability to update your knowledge base will determine success in this new economy.

If our underlying economic structures of society are undergoing a dramatic transformation, our educational structures are seriously lagging behind. The dominant educational paradigm still focuses on what students know, rather than how they use that knowledge. But it is not enough for students to show they are capable of passing public examinations. To thrive in an economy defined by the innovative application of knowledge, we must be able to do more than absorb and feedback information. The central challenge for the education system is to find ways of embedding learning in a range of

meaningful contexts, where students can use their knowledge creatively to make an impact on the world around them.

Knowledge and creativity

If knowledge is king, then creativity is its queen. Creativity is becoming increasingly important in all economic and social contexts, and it is the creative potential of learners which must be unlocked if we are going to be economically competitive and socially cohesive. Creativity in this sense is not about individual characteristics or innate talent. Creativity is the application of knowledge and skills in new ways to achieve a valued goal. To achieve this, creative learners must have four key qualities:

- the ability to identify new problems;
- the ability to transfer knowledge gained in one context to another in order to solve a problem;
- a belief in learning as an incremental process, in which failure is valuable and repeated attempts will eventually lead to success;
- the capacity to focus attention in the pursuit of a goal, or set of goals.

Creative learners depend on creative environments. Rather than being a skill which can be performed on command, it is a form of interaction between the learner and her environment. The Demos analysis of successful creative learning environments suggest there are six key characteristics which should be nurtured:

- Trust – people will only take risks and be able to learn from failure if they have secure, trusting relationships.
- Freedom of action – creative application of knowledge is only possible where people are able to make real choices over what they do and how they try to do it.
- Variation of context – learners need experience applying their skills in a range of contexts in order to make connections between them.
- The right balance between skills and challenge - creativity emerges in environments with challenging activities that have the right level of skill to meet them.
- Interactive exchange of knowledge and ideas – ideas, feedback and evaluation foster creativity, enabling learners to draw on diverse sources of information and expertise.
- Real world outcomes – creative ability and motivation are reinforced by the experience of making an impact and achieving concrete outcomes.

Creating the environment

Developing creativity in learners and in learning environments requires radical

change from the centre. For teachers to feel empowered by this process, Government must lead by example, nurturing local innovation in the community, and pushing creativity through national policy. Rather than trying to increase skills levels through conventional qualifications, Government must take a different approach to educating for creativity. Alongside the new lifelong

School education must be restructured to ensure that every individual has the skills and confidence to use the opportunities a knowledge-based society presents.

learning infrastructure, emerging through FE, school education must be restructured to ensure that every individual has the skills and confidence to use the opportunities a knowledge-based society presents – creative systems based around individual learning needs. Basic skills such as literacy, numeracy and core subject disciplines will continue to be important, but if they are taught in ways that do not facilitate their transfer and application to a range of different contexts, their value will not be realised.

The key policy recommendations which the Demos research and analysis have revealed are:

- Reduce National Curriculum content requirements by half, to create space for a broader range of learning experiences and achieve genuine understanding in each discipline. Creative application of knowledge cannot be learned within a predefined curriculum structure if it is focused too heavily on content, at the expense of depth of understanding and breadth of application.
- Develop a curriculum model that includes extended project-based learning in a range of contexts, including assessment.
- Ensure that every school student has an IT-based Learning Portfolio, so that school becomes the foundation, rather than the endpoint, of learning and individuals' strengths and challenges can be understood.
- Appoint school–community brokers to every school, to co-ordinate learning projects and placements, and create a learning community to support schools and businesses.
- Develop new skill specifications, setting out in detail the creative skills and abilities that should be embedded in every learning experience. They should not be seen as separate from other subjects and disciplines but be integrated into the study of all subjects.
- Reward and disseminate creative input by policy makers, public servants,

teachers and lecturers by adjusting professional contracts and creating “innovation funds”.

- Create a series of databases, linked to the National Grid for Learning and the University for Industry, to match learners with placement opportunities, mentors and ideas that they can apply creatively.
- Develop new models of inter-disciplinary teaching and learning, and adjust teacher training courses to reflect them.

These changes would provoke controversy and resistance. But only radical action will ensure that the UK makes the most of the opportunities presented by the knowledge economy, and that every individual has the capacities and confidence to thrive in the new environment. ■

The ideas raised in this article can be explored in more depth, and debated and discussed at www.creativenet.org.uk.

Interactive and participatory mathematics in the primary classroom

Peter Patilla

Peter Patilla was a primary headteacher for 14 years before becoming a teacher trainer at Sheffield Hallam University. Currently he is acting as a consultant and advisor. A regular presenter at educational conferences, he also has provided school based INSET courses on mathematics both in the UK and for international schools in Europe. For the past few years he has worked extensively in Scotland with teachers and advisors on developing interactive mental mathematics lessons. Peter Patilla is author of many mathematics books for schools and the home market. He is also an educational advisor to the BBC for radio and television broadcasts on mathematics for primary pupils.

Abstract: *Whole class oral and mental mathematics work is an important feature of the teaching of mathematics in primary schools. The idea of suddenly being asked to respond quickly and answer in public can however be threatening to some pupils who may make use of various avoidance strategies to avoid participation. Using a number of simple teaching and organisational strategies can enrich the maths curriculum and foster interaction and participation.*

DURING the past few years there have been various recommendations for improving the teaching and learning of mathematics in the UK. This advice has come from many quarters including the DfEE, QCA, Scottish Office, DENI and HMI reports.^{1,2,3,4,5} There are common strands in the advice that apply to the teaching of mathematics no matter where in the UK you teach. These strands include:

- mathematics lessons need good pace;
- daily oral and mental work is needed to develop and secure pupils' calculation strategies and mental recall skills;
- lessons need to be interactive and participatory;⁶
- whole class teaching has an important part to play;
- direct teaching is important.

In my INSET work across the UK I have focused on the role of interactive and participatory mathematics as part of whole class teaching with particular

emphasis on mental mathematics.^{7,8} This has also addressed working with composite classes in smaller schools. The teacher workshops and INSET sessions have demonstrated how using a few simple teaching and organisational strategies can enrich the mathematics curriculum.

A few thoughts about oral and mental mathematics

Here are four issues that have influenced my approach to the teaching of mental mathematics:

- You do not have to be good at something to enjoy it - a visit to any golf course proves the point.
- Practice of the basics is vital in the development of most skills - even concert pianists still practice their scales.
- Repetition and practice need not be boring – setting achievable challenges, changing pace, keeping activities short and regular, all help in this.
- Large numbers are not always more difficult than smaller numbers- it is arguably easier to add 1000 to 67 than 38.

A distinction should be made between oral mathematics and mental calculation. It is worth considering the difference between:

- hearing a mental maths question and responding orally;
- seeing a calculation written down and solving it mentally before responding orally or by recording the answer.

For example it is reasonable to expect pupils to answer the number bonds 7×8 orally given. It is also reasonable to expect pupils to solve the written calculation $153 + 224$ mentally but not if it is orally given. Some questions need to be written down before being solved mentally.

During INSET sessions I am often asked what are the basic skills that need regular practice. I believe that there are three key areas needing very regular practice.

- Developing sophisticated counting skills⁹ and using them in calculations.
- Learning number bonds ($+$ - x and \div) being able to recall them without hesitation.
- Developing ideas about place value, initially with whole numbers then decimals.

A weakness in any of these areas is not desirable and it only takes a few minutes undertaken very regularly to keep them sharp. It is the application of these three areas that enable mental calculation to occur with the “three Cs”

of Comfort, Confidence and Competence.

“Thinking time” in mental mathematics

The very idea of suddenly being asked to respond quickly and answer in public can be quite threatening. The voice can divorce itself from the brain and you hear yourself answering incorrectly, foolishly or not at all, even when you think you may know the correct answer. An important issue here is that of “thinking time”. This is the time we allow our pupils to take on board the question and then answer. Typically it is less than three seconds. Pupils frequently extend their thinking time by repeating the question. Being second to answer is more advantageous than being first because you have more thinking time. When skills and facts are new more thinking time is appropriate. Through practice and over time thinking time can be reduced so that recall is almost instantaneous. It is worth negotiating with pupils the amount of thinking time they think is required for an activity; they rarely go for the easy options.

Teaching strategies to foster interaction and participation

It is not common for adults to experience a buzz of excitement at the thought of taking part in some mental maths activities. The strategies we choose to employ in whole class or group teaching can build up insecurity and lack of comfort and confidence. Some teaching strategies are inefficient with minimum pupil involvement. Pupils often employ a whole range of avoidance strategies so as not to take part in the activity. Examples of inefficient strategies and the problems they can create include:

- Teacher sets a question and asks for “hands up” with the answers. If it is then common practice to ask pupils without “hands up”, but they quickly learn the Inverse Rule. This Inverse Rule states that you have less chance of being asked if your hand is up and the more enthusiasm you throw into trying to answer the less likely you are of being the “chosen one”.
- Teacher asks a question and an eager pupil calls out the answer. Once an answer has been called out it limits other pupils taking part. However it does seem unkind and unnecessary to discourage the enthusiastic pupil.
- Teacher asks pupils questions one by one round the class. Pupil contribution is over once they have answered and they may have needed to answer only one question in a five-minute activity.

Examples of more efficient teaching strategies that encourage interaction and participation include:

- **Unison response** – teacher asks a question, allows some thinking time

then gives a trigger for all the pupils to answer in unison. In effect this is “called out” answers with the teacher, not the pupil, in control of when answers are “called out”. This is very different from chanting answers. In unison response, teachers are in charge of when the response occurs and they can play around with thinking time, pace, tempo and rhythm of responses.

- **Show me** – each pupil has a simple piece of apparatus such as a set of number cards that they hold up in response to the question. This strategy encourages each pupil to answer every question and there are no “called out” answers. Glancing round the responses gives immediate feedback to the teacher.
- **The answer is – what is the question?** – Pupils are given an answer such as “seven” or “a square” and come up with a range of possible questions that would result in that answer. This can encourage creativity and more open questions.
- **Cover ups** – each pupil has a sheet of numbers, shapes or words. Questions are asked where the answers are on the sheet. Pupils cover up their response or responses with markers. Cover ups allows for multiple responses from each child to each questions. Each group of pupils can have different Cover up sheets yet answer the same teacher questions. For example, a sheet of two-digit numbers and a sheet of three-digit numbers can be used to answer questions such as: Which numbers are even? Which is the largest number? Which numbers are multiples of 5?

It is worth commenting that a significant difference can be observed when pupils have been let into the secret of what is being taught, practiced or expected. When teachers are very explicit with teaching aims their pupils seem to take on board what is expected more rapidly and more confidently.

Organisation for interaction and participation

Thought needs to be given as to when we expect our pupils to cooperate during mental maths activities. Clearly for some activities pupils should be working independently as a class member working on his or her own. On other occasions it is desirable to foster paired work and co-operative work in larger groups. It is even possible for the whole class to support each other during some activities. Two ways of working with a class worthy of consideration are:

- **Big Circle Time** – pupils sit in a large circle with the teacher for the questions and answers. Although it may be organisationally troublesome, it is usually worth the inconvenience. In a circle everyone has eye contact with each other and nothing is in front of the pupil to distract. My

observations suggest that more pupils participate and teacher questioning is more evenly spread during Big Circle Time. Big Circle Time can be used for encouraging class cooperation through activities such as “Pass the shape”. A shape is passed from pupil to pupil, each pupil giving a different fact about the shape. The class has to work together to get the shape as far round the circle as possible. When one pupil stumbles giving a fact they can ask a friend or the “audience”. The class quickly appreciates that whoever starts off has the easiest task and it becomes increasingly more challenging as the shape progresses round the circle. The only way the shape will make a complete lap is by helping each other.

- Co-operating groups –pupils sit in small groups typically of between four and six pupils. Group sizes within a class need not be the same and the composition of the groups can vary from lesson to lesson. The teacher asks questions of the groups, not individuals within the groups. The group has to agree on its response. For example, each pupil within each group makes a two-digit number with a number fan. The teacher asks “Who in your group has a number that is exactly divisible by 3?” Each group then decides who has an appropriate number to hold up. In this way pupils are not acting independently, they support and help each other. This is particularly effective in composite classes.

Examples of Unison Response mental maths activities

Of all the teaching strategies discussed during INSET sessions with teachers, pupils, parents and advisors the one that creates an instant positive reaction is Unison Response. Here are some Unison Response activities that I have created to involve teachers and parents during these sessions to exemplify what is meant by participatory, fun, challenging activities. Each can be easily adapted to work with reception pupils through to year 8 pupils. Only the content changes. None of the activities require costly materials or take up a great deal of time. What is interesting is that when participants make mistakes they usually laugh. Laughter and mental maths did not usually go together. All the activities will work with large numbers of participants.

- **Thigh, clap, snap, snap** – Pupils slap thighs, clap both hands then snap right hand fingers followed by left hand fingers; repeating this in a regular rhythm. They count in fours each time they slap thighs, the other actions provide the thinking time. As they improve cut down the thinking time by counting in fours on each snap of the fingers or even in time to each action. Now try counting back from 100 in sevens.
- **Let’s swing** – Make a pendulum from any suitable object and swing it. As the pendulum swings to the left give a number. When it reaches the top of the right hand swing pupils have to subtract seven from the given number.

The swing provides the thinking time, reaching the top of the right hand side provides the trigger for the response.

- **Clap happy** –State a number then clap your hands three times opening them out. Once the hands open pupils give the number that makes the given number up to 100. The three claps provide the thinking time; the opening of the hands is the trigger for the response. As pupils improve, cut down the thinking time by quickening or cutting down on the number of claps.

In Conclusion

Mathematics can only be enjoyed when pupils feel comfortable with basic facts and skills. Comfort comes from competence with mental skills. Mental skills are best developed from short daily activities. These mental activities can be made enjoyable if they are interactive, participatory, challenging and well paced. There is little point in developing skills unless they are applied in a variety of situations that enrich the mathematical diet. Even mathematically able pupils can become insecure. You do not have to be mathematically gifted to enjoy mathematics. ■

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The education of the most able pupils

Joan Freeman

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Abstract: *Developing the needs of very able children can be of benefit to all pupils, yet before the 1994 review of the National Curriculum the needs of the brightest children were not officially provided for. This article looks at how provision for able pupils has developed and expanded to include untapped gifted potential. It also outlines Government schemes for the gifted and talented.*

- “When specific attention was given to the needs of the very able children there was often a general increase in the level of expectation for all pupils and this was sometimes reflected in improved examination results.
- “The schools which were most successful at challenging their very able pupils consistently sought to encourage individual effort and develop independence. The judicious intervention of the teacher to urge pupils to a higher level of knowledge, skill, understanding and thinking was crucial.
- “It should be possible to cater for the majority of very able pupils within the context of the normal school curriculum, if proper consideration is given to their particular special needs, and some flexibility is introduced into both organisational and teaching strategies.”

The Education of Very Able Children in Maintained Schools (HMI, 1992)¹

TOO often, recognising and providing for the needs of the gifted seems to rest more on the shifting sands of political and social attitudes than either resources or the educational rights of children. Yet as HMI found, it is not only the individual pupils who benefit from such concern, it also has a beneficial “spin-off” to others in the school, and by inference, to the wider community.

The highly able are defined here as those who either demonstrate exceptionally high-level performance, whether across a range of endeavours or in a limited field, or those whose potential for this has not yet been seen. About the top 20 per cent in any subject-area is a useful cut-off point. Yet for the teacher, it is only too easy to miss potentially gifted pupils who are “merely” working at above average level. Regarding giftedness in terms of potential takes away many inhibiting feelings of élitism about helping these pupils. Without rich learning opportunities, children’s gifts, whether singular or across the board, cannot develop, so that the education they receive is in a sense part of the identification.

The National Curriculum, gifts and talents

Before the 1994 review of the National Curriculum, the needs of the brightest children were not officially provided for. Then an “Access” statement (below) appeared in the introduction to each of the Subject Orders in the Revised National Curriculum, issued in January 1995:

“For the small number of pupils who may need the provision, material may be selected from earlier or later key stages where this is necessary to enable individual pupils to progress and demonstrate achievement. Such material should be presented in contexts suitable to the pupil’s age”.

In addition, each Attainment Target within each National Curriculum subject had a description for “exceptional performance” which was available for very able pupils and to help teachers differentiate exceptional performance at Key Stage 3.

Yet the early National Curriculum was said to bring advantages for the more able in that it has “... concentrated attention on the need for differentiation of work for pupils of different abilities, and its procedures for assessment, recording and reporting on pupils’ knowledge, skills and understanding have helped to focus more sharply on the achievements and progress of the more able.”² This recognition of the need for differentiation was indeed excellent, but the reference to measurement as a means to decide on which pupils to help was distinctly limited as it could miss underachieving pupils.

As late as May 1995, OFSTED published reviews of primary (first year) and secondary (second year) state school inspection findings for teachers in 12 specific subjects, but only a few of them referred to high ability. There was no reference to the highly able in history, music, art or physical education, for example. In mathematics, though, it was described how, “It is rare for attention to be given to the needs of able pupils other than by placing them in “top” sets.”³ Almost all reference to the highly able was in terms of advanced school achievement, and most notably to the possibility of pushing children

more quickly through courses, such as sitting examinations early, and even personalised time-tables to allow some speed-up of knowledge acquisition.

There are possible benefits, however, in current National Curriculum instructions:

- Affirmation that the teachers' own assessments and test results are of equal value to "official" test results, and will be given equal prominence in all forms of reporting, which enables the teachers' sensitivity to be used.
- Marked test scripts written by 11- and 14-year-olds are to be returned to schools so that teachers can exploit their diagnostic value.
- Most importantly, there is an emphasis on cross-curricular work, which supports the theory of transfer of learning strategies involved in differentiated tasks and activities.
- Because the new National Curriculum involves pupils in much more research and project-based activity, it should not only broaden the horizons of all children but enable the highly able to have experiences which they can expand and take further.

Present government schemes for the gifted and talented

The new Labour Government in 1998 made a sharp policy turn away from only providing for children with demonstrated gifts, as in the Assisted Places Scheme⁴ to include the development of untapped gifted potential. The expressed aims are to positively change perceptions and practice towards gifted education.

The Government's first action was to set up a Gifted and Talented Advisory Group, now disbanded. At the same time, I was invited by OFSTED to overview critically the international scientific research evidence on gifted education.⁴ Two copies were sent free to every local education authority in England and Wales. The prime finding was that in order to reach their full potential the most able need rich and challenging educational provision.

Only a year later, in March 1999, the UK Gifted and Talented Programme began. It is part of the £50 million initiative, Excellence in Cities, designed to raise the aspirations of children in the inner cities, soon to be extended to rural children.⁵ In the same year, a House of Commons Select Committee convened to consider gifted education. The Committee's two volume report suggested a broad approach to include between 30 and 40 per cent of children.⁶ But governments do not always listen to advice, even from their own elected representatives, choosing instead to distinguish the top five to 10 per cent in each age-group of secondary schools, no matter what the intake and standard of the school, currently being extended to primary schools.

The major principles of gifted education – identification, acceleration and enrichment – are part of government provision. Acceleration is seen in the

high targets for local education authorities for early examination entries. The main effort, though, is going into enrichment schemes, which emphasise networking facilities for study-support such as funded homework clubs, mentors and the use of educational partners such as museums, galleries, libraries, sports clubs and theatres. The variety of schemes, each with a strict production plan, is outlined here.

UK schemes for the gifted

- **Master classes** around the country are being extended. After piloted work in 10 schools, 56 projects affecting more than 19,000 pupils have been approved. Many more are due.
- **Advanced Maths Centres** have been allocated £30,000 each this year. The 12 pilots are for primary school children who will take their national examinations early. Pupils selected for this fast-track tuition will continue with normal lessons, receiving their advanced work out of school hours. The centres are to be extended nationally.
- **University summer schools** will be available for 5000 10-14 year-olds in 2002, particularly in the inner cities. This is headed by the University of Warwick as an Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth following an American diagnose-and-treat model. The students will be selected by tests.
- **World-class tests**, a multi-million pound project to tap mathematics and problem-solving potential have been in preparation for two years. Marking is guided by internationally recognised high performance. Although designed for the top 20 per cent of 9, 13 and 18 year-olds, they can be taken years earlier. They will be largely attempted via CD ROMs on computers – to be made available to every child – and are intended to elicit creativity and quality in higher-order thinking, to help select high-quality students for university. However, there are still some loose ends to be tied up, such as what happens to the children who are successful. These developing tests are being sold to other countries.
- **Advanced Extension Awards** are tests designed to challenge the most able 18 year-olds by requiring a greater depth of understanding and the ability to think critically.
- **Literacy and numeracy guidance** for small children to work at a high level started in January 2001. At present, all children in school up to the age of 11 are obliged to study literacy and numeracy each for one hour every school day, which is improving standards across the country. There are some differentiation problems, though, for the gifted who can already read before they reach school.
- **Summer school programmes** to be organised and run by individual schools have been piloted, and about 500 for 10-14 year-olds are to be in place by the summer of 2001.

- **Learning mentors** are to be made available in all secondary schools in designated areas, with particular concern for developing high-level potential. There will be further training in this for co-ordinators and teachers.
- **A National Toolkit for teaching the gifted** is to be developed within the next three years to be worked within the generic guidance for teaching the gifted at all stages of the National Curriculum in all statutory subjects.
- **Specialist schools**, such as for languages or mathematics, will increase to 800 in number and are eligible for community funding to be spent on study support activities for the gifted and talented. Music, ballet and drama scholarships have been increased to 2,200 by 2001. Gifted pupils may be allowed to drop some courses to specialise in their preferred areas, though they must still complete the basic compulsory curriculum. Schools will make such decisions.
- **Beacon schools** are each to be awarded up to £50,000 per year to share best practice for teaching the most able. They will be part of a local network led by successful schools with a strong track record in providing for the gifted and talented, which can also include businesses and places of higher education.
- **Advanced skills teachers** are being designated to work in their own school or help in other schools.
- **Best Practice Research Scholarships** are available to teachers for action research on developing giftedness in the classroom.
- National **school inspections** are being pointed towards the teaching and learning of the gifted and talented, and reference must be made to this in the inspectors' reports. It is one of three identified areas for underachievement that inspectors must look for.
- **Qualifications** are changing.⁷ GCSEs are becoming merely "progress checks" for the academically most advanced, and A-levels are to be marked at a more challenging starred level.

How it looks

This explosion of help has been generally welcomed by teachers, even though they must add it to their other already heavy obligations. As a developmental psychologist, I am uneasy about the lack of attention to emotional development: no specialist counselling is planned for all this high-powered learning, though families will be involved. One could say it is a blunderbuss approach, in that not all the aims will reach their targets. But on the other hand, some will be direct hits.

It is never possible to anticipate what will emerge from such profound changes. I hope it will ease out the self-styled "experts" who offer unevaluated activities for gifted children and teacher-training. This generous Government

provision should also enable teachers and parents to redirect the energy they now spend in raising funds for the gifted to more practical activities.

Having examined the international evidence as well as the results from my comparative 27 year study of recognised-gifted, unrecognised-gifted and non-gifted children,⁸ it seemed to me that the most immediate need was to help the undiscovered gifted. However skilfully an élite is selected, it will inevitably miss some whose high level potential is not spotted and developed.

I have suggested The Sports Approach.⁴ In the same way that school sport is universally available, with extras for the talented, so should extra educational support and supervised practice be available in other areas such as for potentially gifted chemists, dancers or translators, whether in teams or individually. With guidance from teachers and parents, children who are keen to learn in any area could volunteer for time in the school laboratories or field

A big problem for the talented in a mixed-ability class can be in adapting socially with classmates, while remaining creatively and intellectually alive and different from them.

trips, etc. Almost all of what is needed already exists, and schools can combine forces to enable children to aim for excellence. Using children's own interests in this way should greatly increase the proportion of children who we now see as gifted. Gratifyingly, to some extent this idea is now being put into practice.

Improving high-level creativity

Expecting a child to think creatively at a level of brilliance, while others around are behaving "normally", demands exceptional maturity, since a high level of performance needs to be shown at some times and conformity to social norms at others. A big problem for the talented in a mixed-ability class can be in adapting socially with classmates, while remaining creatively and intellectually alive and different from them.

For pupils who have concern for ideas for their own sake, learning is not just a matter of steady work producing quantifiable results. These pupils are often particularly sensitive to classroom and school management procedures, being less happy than others where there is a rigid teaching structure and limited pupil involvement.⁸ In such classrooms they may be seen as nuisances because of their critical thinking, and can benefit much more than other children from flexibility in their learning. Conformity to social desirability in the classroom puts at risk both their uniqueness and the potential enrichment they can bring to the class and society, as well as possibly damaging their self-concepts.

The National Curriculum now gives teachers some flexibility in being able to decide what to teach in depth and what to take more superficially. But, of course, formal education should not be seen as the only route for developing the highest levels of expertise. Moreover, because it is not possible to predict the kinds of talents that will be needed in the future, there has to be a wide variety of skills and outlooks available in any society. ■

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Teachers, creativity and the curriculum: a cross-cultural perspective

Abstract: *An increasingly prescriptive National Curriculum, driven by external targets, has led to primary school teachers' commitment to a broad curriculum being compromised. Comparisons with secondary school teaching in France and Denmark suggest that the narrowness of the National Curriculum is also impacting on the work of England's secondary school teachers. Space for professional autonomy with regard to the content, pace and assessment is being reduced.*

“We want to free the energies, talents and creativity of heads, governors and teachers to support them to achieve higher standards and to enable them to innovate and move towards earned autonomy”

Estelle Morris¹

In a recent speech to the Social Market Foundation, Estelle Morris, the Secretary of State for Education, outlined Government plans for the future of teachers and teaching. She called for radical change across the education system that would enable the learning needs of individual pupils to be put at “the centre of everything we do”. This would necessitate moving away from an “old model” of the classroom towards an education system characterised by flexibility and innovation. This can be seen in contrast to on-going concerns that current policy, with its emphasis on target-setting and prescriptive pedagogy, could be restricting, rather than enhancing the ability of teachers in England to engage with a flexible and creative approach to curriculum issues.

Evidence from the PACE (Primary Assessment, Curriculum and Experience Project) ² drew attention to the pressure experienced by primary teachers during the 1990s as a result of an increasingly prescriptive curriculum and the setting of performance targets for pupil outcomes in national testing. Teachers'

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commitment to a broad curriculum was being compromised by a focus on literacy and numeracy. This finding is supported by the latest Annual Report from Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools, which draws attention to the fact that "in some primary schools the arts, creative and practical subjects are receiving less attention than previously".³ The Chief Inspector goes on to suggest that this "risks an unacceptable narrowing of the curriculum pupils receive".

More recent findings from the ENCOMPASS (Education and National Culture: A Comparative Study of Attitudes to Secondary Education) Project emphasise that this focus on a narrowly-defined, prescriptive National Curriculum, driven by the needs of external testing, is also impacting on the

There is a clear tension between the rhetoric of the "learning society" ... and the reality of the "performance" culture which is being promoted by current policy-making.

work of secondary school teachers in England. This recent three country study which looked at pupil perspectives and secondary teacher practice in England, France and Denmark suggests that space for professional autonomy with regard to the content, pace and assessment of learning is being reduced in English classrooms.⁴ The data, gained from observation and interview, in 10 case study schools in the three countries, sought to understand the impact on teachers and pupils of the common international pressures for ever-increasing standards within education. A central question was the extent to which these common concerns were impacting in similar ways on teachers in the three countries, or whether in fact they were having a different effect, largely as a result of the influence of national context.

Teaching aims and priorities

Teachers within all three national education systems spoke in similar general terms when asked about their aims and priorities for their pupils. All were concerned that pupils should achieve academically, that they should grow and develop as individuals and that they should acquire skills and abilities, enabling them to take their place as future citizens and workers. However, these aims were often expressed in terms which showed the differing ideological influences within the three systems. Teachers in England stressed the importance of the development of the "whole child" and the individualist nature of the educational process, with an emphasis on differentiated teaching. In France, teachers emphasised a notion of equal entitlement for all children which focused on their intellectual and cognitive development. Finally, in

Denmark, there was a concern expressed by teachers devoted to engendering a love of learning and the fostering of a co-operative and collaborative outlook, to support the development of future citizens.

Some other aspects of teachers' priorities were also quite specific to the national context and related to the underlying aims of the national education system as a whole. In England, teachers' responses displayed an emphasis on the need to enable pupils to reach pre-set targets in their learning, which had increasingly become the measure by which individual teaching was being judged:

“Uh, a difficult question. I suppose really, what I'd say was very important to me is that they learn to enjoy a language, and they learn to see it as not just grammar but as a way of life ... But, obviously, I am pressurised by exams and things. I do feel that I want to do well and I do want them all to reach a high standard.”

[English teacher of modern languages]

French teachers, in contrast, often cited the more characteristically French aim of the transmission of communal knowledge, so that all pupils would attain the same basic level of education. As one teacher expressed it, “All the children of one generation should share the same knowledge base, at least up to 16 years of age”. This emphasis on egalitarianism, French identity and social cohesion is a central part of the policy rhetoric of education in France. French teachers were also more concerned than their English and Danish colleagues with an emphasis on structure, system and stages. Each stage in the education system was seen as a rung in the ladder to get to the next stage so that both teachers, parents and children shared a common idea of a clear “ladder of progress” through the education system.

While recognising the need for their pupils to achieve academically, Danish teachers also put a great deal of emphasis on the development of social skills and the need to engender enjoyment, self-motivation and independence in learning, by learning how to learn. As one Danish teacher said, the important thing was that:

“... they learn to respect each other. That they take responsibility for what they are doing and that they do what is important in the learning context, whether I am watching them or not, either because they like it or because they have to. It is also crucial that they learn to co-operate.”

[Danish teacher of music]

The National Curriculum: content and assessment

All three national groups of teachers worked within a centrally determined national curriculum. However, the extent to which they felt constrained by

this differed. English teachers felt that their highly prescribed curriculum combined with “high stakes” national testing gave them little scope for personal creativity or flexibility in their day-to-day teaching. Their French and Danish colleagues, in contrast, felt less constrained within more loosely defined national curriculum frameworks, which, while aiding social cohesion, also allowed considerable room for individual interpretation. As one French teacher put it:

“I think an important part of education is to pass on common references to all social classes. I strongly support a national curriculum. The national curriculum is a norm. The norm isn’t an objective, it is something that provides a structure.”

Danish teachers in particular had been given more flexibility by their latest School Act to select and organise teaching content in such a way that, in their view, it gave their particular group of pupils the best opportunities to learn. It was up to individual teachers to determine their working methods and content, as far as possible, in co-operation with their pupils. This meant that the national curriculum was seen as a loose framework, within which both individual municipalities, schools and teachers could have a great deal of flexibility.

Teachers in all three countries wanted their pupils to enjoy their subjects and to be well motivated to learn. This was a more pressing concern for teachers with more disadvantaged intakes, who tried hard to be innovative and make their lessons more interesting and meaningful for their pupils. Danish teachers were particularly keen to use examples from their pupils’ lived experiences in their teaching, and to enter into discussion with them about news items in the media or issues of international importance. Within the English schools, however, there was some evidence that outside pressures had limited teachers’ flexibility to use a creative approach to pedagogy, as this teacher explained when talking about the effect of “high stakes” national testing:

“And yes, it can stultify, it can stifle creativity in a way. When I teach A-level, for instance, I’m a geographer, we do two residential courses on Exmoor and Snowdonia and the children go there and they are inspired. And we do wonderful geography and we work from nine in the morning ‘til 10 o’clock at night, doing geography, and they love it, and it’s really good. But when we get back into the classroom I have to sort of stop that and I have to start dictating notes. Because they need to have the notes, they need to be spoon fed the notes, to learn by heart, to get the A level grade.”

[English teacher of geography]

Differences were also found in the assessment procedures used to review pupils' work. Teachers in all three systems used a mixture of formative and summative assessment to help pupils understand how they were progressing. Teachers in all three countries also involved pupils in group or class discussions at the end of particular projects to assess the value of the work done and there was some evidence of the use of pupil self-assessment. However, English teachers, in contrast to their French and Danish colleagues, were required to have a more active interest in summative assessment, consistent with national and school target-setting. Danish teachers, in contrast, were actively discouraged from giving their pupils marks for their work until Grade 8 [14/15 year-olds] and were able to put greater emphasis on a dialogue between teacher and learner in assessing progress. Some teachers in England were concerned about the amount of testing their pupils were subjected to and the lack of time for a more informal, one-to-one formative model. They also recognised that the pressure of assessment and testing impacted differently on different pupils and, for lower achievers, it could be de-motivating.

Policy impact

Policy changes within each of the systems were creating new ways of working for the teachers. English teachers were struggling to hold on to their commitment to the affective and pastoral aspects of education, while at the same time being set ever increasing targets for the achievement of their pupils in national testing. Pressures from an increasingly diverse student population were causing French teachers to reassess the role of the affective and pastoral, within teaching and learning. Meanwhile, concern with levels of pupil achievement, prompted partly by the poor showing of Danish pupils in international reading tests, was creating pressure for a more differentiated approach to pupil learning in Denmark.

All three systems were searching for ways to support teachers in increasing their pupils' level of academic achievement. A major concern in relation to all three is that an increasing economic pressure for "performance" in a narrow range of subjects might lead to a learning environment where both teachers and pupils are so constrained that their ability to think and to work creatively and flexibly is drastically reduced. There is a clear tension between the rhetoric of the "learning society" as represented in English Government proposals on lifelong learning⁵ with the empowerment for both teachers and pupils that it implies, and the reality of the "performance" culture which is being promoted by current policy-making. The call from national Governments for resilient and flexible learners, whose intrinsic motivation will provide the foundation of future economic and social development, will go un-answered unless there is some reduction of current constraints on the exercise of teachers' professional

expertise and ability to work creatively with pupils. ■

The PACE Project was funded by the ESRC in three stages from 1989-1996 and included the following collaborators: Andrew Pollard, Patricia Broadfoot, Paul Croll, Marilyn Osborn, Dorothy Abbot, Edie Black, Elizabeth McNess and Pat Triggs.

The ENCOMPASS Project was mostly funded by the ESRC from 1998-2000 and included the following collaborators: Marilyn Osborn, Patricia Broadfoot, Elizabeth McNess, Claire Planel, Pat Triggs [University of Bristol], Birte Ravn [The Danish University of Education], Thyge Winther-Jensen [University of Copenhagen] and Olivier Cousin [University of Bordeaux 11].

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The Cliff Richard Tennis Foundation: dedicated to making a difference

Abstract: *The Cliff Richard Tennis Foundation was established to bring tennis into schools across the country. Through tennis children can learn how to succeed, stretch the body and the mind, make new friends and adapt these skills to other aspects of their lives. The Foundation has reached over 200,000 children through its programmes, including those from areas with high levels of unemployment, where children might not ordinarily get the opportunity to learn about the game. This article details the work of the Foundation and looks at the impact it has had on children's lives.*

The Rationale

When people hear Sir Cliff Richard's name they immediately think of music, not sport. Yet it is through sport, specifically tennis, that he has reached more than 200,000 of the nation's children.

Sir Cliff's passion for tennis developed in the 1980s when Sue Barker introduced him to the game. Realising what a positive influence the sport could be, he decided to do what he could to create the opportunity for youngsters to play by forming the Cliff Richard Tennis Foundation in 1991. The mission was clear: to introduce children across the UK to tennis by bringing programmes directly to them, particularly in state primary schools.

The programme exceeded even Sir Cliff's expectations by becoming the UK's leading grassroots tennis scheme. Since 1992, more than 1,400 primary schools have participated in the Cliff Richard Tennis Trail, receiving equipment free of charge, a teachers' resource pack and follow-on coaching programmes.

Clearly the Foundation programmes have helped to address a great need. Today sport is more important than ever. According to recent research published by the British Heart Foundation, children today are less fit than they were even 10 years ago. Their activity levels have declined, with over one quarter of 11-16 year-olds watching television for more than four hours a day.

One in five children is overweight and one in ten, obese. More children are

Sue Mappin

Sue Mappin is the director of the Cliff Richard Tennis Foundation

suffering from diabetes and anorexia at a younger age. Although experts recommend that physical activity can help to offset these disorders, not enough is being done. UK primary schools have more than halved the amount of time allocated to PE lessons over the past six years and our secondary schools offer less PE than any other country in Europe. This situation is not helped when councils across the land are continuing to sell off school playing fields for redevelopment at a furious rate.

What Sir Cliff realised was that through discovering tennis at an early age, new doors can be opened for youngsters. They can learn how to succeed, stretch the body and the mind, make new friends and adapt these skills to other aspects of their lives.

“We need to see new thinking and new action about the ways to improve sport in our country. We want to see everyone given a better sporting future. So that the practicalities of sport can match the potential of sport. So that the power of sport can be available to all. And so that the passion of sport can continue to move us and engage us and be part of our lives. Sport matters.”

(Tony Blair)

The Programmes

The Cliff Richard Tennis Foundation runs a number of activities including the Tennis Trail, Beginner Squads, the Trailblazers, Assessment Days, and through its fundraising campaign, Kids on Court is currently expanding its grassroots activities to work with other charities and organisations.

Celebrating its tenth anniversary, the Tennis Trail continues to pursue its objectives:

- To take tennis directly to children in state primary schools;
- To encourage and assist the schools involved with the scheme to feature tennis on their timetable on a year-round basis;
- To give athletically talented children the opportunity to become more seriously involved with tennis;
- To introduce tennis as a family sport – a sport that can be played for a lifetime; and
- To promote and assist in development of tennis programmes for children in each area visited.

The Tennis Trail targets towns, cities and remote rural areas where there is often high unemployment or a large percentage of single parents; places where the children might not ordinarily get the chance to learn about the game.

The team of professionals running the programme is on the road

throughout the school year. Each school receives an equipment package and a resource pack for teachers, enabling schools to continue to teach the sport long after the team leaves. On average, the Trail visits 10 schools per area and brings tennis coaching to approximately 1,500 children. The school programme includes an aerobic warm-up, hand-eye coordination exercises and racket and ball skills. Video footage of great tennis matches is also included, so that the participants can appreciate the excitement of the sport.

An extensive follow-on coaching programme, set up with the help of the local authority and local tennis development officers, ensures that the schools visited have the necessary back-up to continue offering tennis as part of the curriculum for all the pupils in the school.

Wherever the Tennis Trail goes, it links with an affordable tennis facility, to develop a relationship both with the schools and the families of the pupils. That way it can really generate an on-going interest in tennis throughout the area. It is anticipated that another 30,000 youngsters in 200 schools will participate in this year's programme, bringing the total number of participants to 230,000 over the past decade.

As the Trail travels across the country, the coaches identify talented children, those with good athletic potential, hand-eye coordination, and a competitive edge. These children are invited to play in a beginner squad at the local tennis facility. The squad meets on a weekly basis for group coaching. If their tennis skills progress quickly, the Trail helps by providing one-to-one coaching.

Those who are offered individual coaching and grants become Trailblazers who receive funds to help toward tennis coaching, tournament fees and equipment costs. There are more than 25 Trailblazers around the country. Many represent their county in tournaments and many do so with great success. Four Trailblazers are currently recognised as national standard in their age group and one has recently achieved National Futures status. Trailblazers of today may well become the national champions of tomorrow.

Many of our Trailblazers have had to overcome considerable difficulties in their lives. One girl, who now regularly wins tournaments in her native Scotland, was a severe asthmatic reliant on inhalers. That changed when she started to play tennis seriously, resulting in increased strength and lung function.

Another Eurasian boy was on the verge of having to give up tennis because his family could not afford the coaching fees. Then he became a Trailblazer. Through the programme he was able to develop his skills and ultimately win

UK primary schools have more than halved the amount of time allocated to PE lessons over the past six years and our secondary schools offer less PE than any other country in Europe.

a sports scholarship to Tim Henman's alma mater.

Another current Trailblazer from the South of England came from a troubled family. As a result of her situation, she was on the verge of being excluded from school. Tennis gave her a necessary anchor. Through her interest and development in the sport, she found a purpose in life, her results in school have improved and she now represents her county in tennis.

Assessment Days provide a means for British youngsters, who are already playing tennis, but not in the Lawn Tennis Association Futures Programme, to apply for a professional assessment of their tennis skills. Not only do these days succeed in identifying the best of our tennis talent, but they also provide the opportunity for talented young people to receive tennis coaching and funding to further develop their skills. The Foundation accepts applications for assistance from British children aged between seven and 18 years. Only independent applications are accepted. Successful applicants are invited along with their parents and coaches to the quarterly Assessment Days.

At these events the children are put through their paces with a series of tests. They are monitored and evaluated by international tennis coaches and fitness specialists. Each child's tennis is video-taped and an independent written assessment is then made available to the player and his/her coach.

Following the Assessment Day, recommendations for grants are put forward to the Trustees of the Charity. To date more than £70,000 has been given as grant aid to children deemed to have the potential to play at an international level, or deserving of encouragement from the Foundation.

The Kids on Court campaign began in 2000 to enable the Foundation to expand its reach and make tennis accessible to all youngsters in the UK, regardless of background, colour or creed. With Sue Barker as president of the campaign, this initiative has already raised significant funds and linked with other charities and organisations to achieve its goals.

Among the partners the Foundation has worked with through Kids on Court are Sargent Cancer Care for Children and Kids Company. The Sargent Cancer Care partnership is a meaningful one and has taken the Cliff Richard Tennis Foundation in an exciting new direction. Sargent Cancer Care provides psychological and social support for youngsters who have survived cancer or are in remission from the illness. It operates with a skilled network of specially trained Sargent social workers who are based at all the major cancer centres in the UK. As an adjunct to this work, they have recently opened a residential summer camp at Malcolm Sargent House in Bexley, Kent. This pioneering centre provides a wide range of educational, vocational, therapeutic and social activities for adolescent survivors of cancer as well as for the siblings and friends of those who have died. The aim is to provide adolescents with a positive experience to balance the trauma and help them towards leading more independent lives.

The Foundation was invited to run a tennis coaching camp at Malcolm Sargent House for all the children staying at the centre, regardless of their physical stamina or level of experience. Based on the success of the programme in the first year, the Foundation will expand its activities with the charity in 2002.

Another pilot scheme to reach the grassroots was established with Kids Company in Southwark, South London. Founded by Camila Batmanghelidjh as a place of refuge and safety for exceptionally vulnerable children who had been failed by the system, Kids Company has become a haven for more than 200 children since 1996.

The Foundation started working with Kids Company last summer in a pilot scheme to devise a special coaching programme for the 16- and 17 year-olds to train them as coaches and enable them to teach the younger children. In this way, the Cliff Richard Tennis Foundation hopes to reach out and help children help other children.

Kids on Court is all about taking the initiative to reach youngsters in all walks of life and give them an opportunity through tennis to improve their lives. More exciting projects are in the planning stages for 2002 and beyond.

The Future

“What we really aim to do is encourage children to involve themselves in a sport such as tennis that in turn can improve their overall well-being and open up new doors of opportunity. If a few end up at Wimbledon in another 10 years, that will be an added bonus. If a few end up off the streets, happier and healthier, that will be worth everything.”

(Sue Mappin.) ■

Book reviews

ENGLISH FRAMEWORKING: THE CREATIVE LITERACY COURSE FOR ENGLISH AT 11-14 and TEACHERS' RESOURCES

Julia Strong, Pam Bloomfield and Emily Rought-Brookes

Collins 2001 £8.99 and £29.99 ISBN 0 00 711349 8 and 0 00 7111350 1

English Frameworking is a creative literacy course for 11 – 14 year olds, with a student book for each year group accompanied by a comprehensive photocopiable teachers' resource book.

There are quite a number of good creative literacy books available at the moment, which cover many of the objectives of the English framework, but I think *English Frameworking* is one of the best that I have seen. The book for pupils is bright, attractive and very clear in its aims and objectives. I particularly like the chatty way it “speaks” to the pupils, outlining the task in hand at class, group and individual level. If I were a pupil I would love it!

Teachers' Resources is a dream. Every lesson is explained, objectives identified and the introduction, development and plenary sections could not be more clear or concise. There are also pages of excellent photocopiable worksheets, planning frames, response grids and OHT templates that support the course book. In addition, there is a CD-ROM with medium and short term teaching plans.

I am so impressed I am going to buy the other books in the series.

JANE HARGREAVES

WHAT MAKES A GOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER?

Caroline Gipps, Bet McCallum and Eleanore Hargreaves

Routledge 2000 £12.99 ISBN 0415232473

When I was a student teacher we were well-versed in theories of teaching and learning but short on practical experiences. Most of us relied heavily on observations of and tips from teachers in whose schools we were practising. You could always tell who the good teachers were even after only one or two sessions in their classes. Making explicit the reasons for their success, however, was not so easy.

The authors of this book have attempted to do just that by observing and interviewing a sample of 24 teachers identified by their LEAs as being “experts”. The sample cuts across primary phases and geographical settings.

The book describes common lesson patterns, teaching strategies and assessment and attempts to explain in practical terms what, why and how

good teachers teach. There is a short section towards the end of the book about children's own views of learning which the authors had not originally planned. However, in light of OFSTED moves to include children's perceptions of their teachers in future inspections, it may well be a good starting point for further research.

This book is particularly useful to student teachers and those just embarking on their careers. It should be compulsory reading for teacher trainers who have been out of the classroom for a while.

LESLEY AUGER

BECOMING AN EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTITIONER - A FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHER-RESEARCHERS

Olwen McNamara (Ed)

Routledge Falmer 2002 Paperback £18.99 ISBN 0-415-25244-1

This book is an outcome of the school-based Research Consortium led by Manchester Metropolitan University and funded by the Teacher Training Agency. The book's content may be of a high quality, but it is not arranged in the most appropriate way for its target audience.

The reports of classroom research, in the central section of the book, are candid and thought-provoking. Most are written jointly by a teacher-researcher and an HEI colleague from the Consortium and include an investigation of the views of pupils. The reports cover a wide range of topics, including plotting effective narrative writing with 10-year old children, seeking ways to make Year 3 children and teachers effective speakers and listeners, the learning and teaching of mental arithmetic in Year 4, the teaching and learning of forces in Key Stage 2 and streaming in Key Stage 2.

In Chapter Seven, Mandy Walsh and Dave Hustler develop an interesting distinction between the 'hard' story (samples, measurable effects and the language of 'semi-experiments', objectivity and being – or attempting to be – scientific) and the 'soft' story of their classroom research. Regarding the former they state, "... we have not shown that there is any reason to believe that the teaching approach intervention we introduced has had any effect on the children's achievement." The 'soft' benefits of their research were extensive and included the engagement of an increasing number of colleagues and the valuing of teachers' 'experienced intuition'.

There is little mention and no quantification of the time commitments made by teachers involved in research. For teachers to engage in research (as distinct from engaging with research) it is essential that the necessary amount of time is costed and allocated.

DAVE PACKHAM

TEACHING CITIZENSHIP IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

James Arthur and Daniel Wright (Eds)

David Fulton 2001 £17.00 ISBN 1 85346 744 8

The stated aim of this book is “to help student teachers and those teachers who are new to citizenship education to develop an understanding of the teaching and learning about citizenship education with a clear emphasis on classroom teaching”. Without doubt, there is a need for such a text, but I doubt if this is it.

It should have been, as it is written by a professor of education and a serving teacher and includes chapters by a deputy head, a senior lecturer in education and a former principal subject officer of QCA. Each chapter sets out its aims at the start and ends with tasks to be completed by its readers. The book is so verbose, however, that it could be reduced to a readable tenth of its present size by cutting out much content that is commonplace and some repetitive educational jargon.

The most useful chapter is that on resources but, unfortunately, it could have been fuller. Ironically its author, David Ledington, refers us to another book he is editing called *Resources for the Teaching of Citizenship in the Secondary School!*

Welcome as the emphasis on citizenship is in the Government’s thinking on the curriculum, there is a danger that it will become either so diffuse so as not to be noticed or an appendage, given little value by school or students. There is a desperate need, therefore, for some hard thinking and practical advice as to how it can be implemented. It is a shame that this opportunity has been lost here.

MALCOLM HORNE

Reviewers

Jane Hargreaves, Peripatetic teacher of the hearing impaired

Lesley Auger, Primary School teacher responsible for special educational needs

Dave Packham, Teacher, Hyde Technology School, Tameside

Malcolm Horne, Past president of the NUT